


JUDAS

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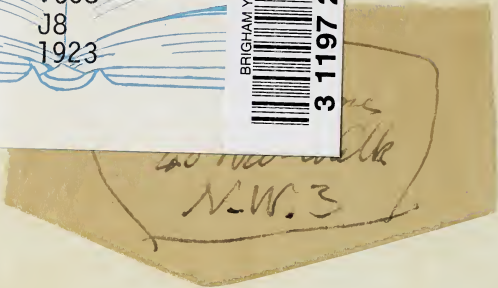
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JUDAS

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

POETRY

1899. THE VINEDRESSER AND OTHER POEMS
1901. APHRODITE AGAINST ARTEMIS
1903. ABSALOM
1903. DANAË
1905. THE LITTLE SCHOOL
1906. POEMS
1911. MARIAMNE
1911. A SICILIAN IDYLL
1914. THE SEA IS KIND
1917. THE LITTLE SCHOOL (ENLARGED)
1920. DANAË
1920. TRAGIC MOTHERS

PROSE

1899. THE CENTAUR AND THE BACCHANT, FROM
THE FRENCH BY MAURICE DE GUERIN
1920. THE POWERS OF THE AIR

CRITICISM

1903. ALTDORFER
1904. DURER
1906. CORREGGIO
1910. ART AND LIFE (FLAUBERT AND BLAKE)
1915. HARK TO THESE THREE
1919. SOME SOLDIER POETS

JUDAS

BY

T. STURGE
MOORE

GRANT RICHARDS LTD.
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TO ALFRED HUGH FISHER

CONTENTS

	PAGE
EAST OF THE CITY	8
WEST OF THE CITY	33
WITHIN THE WALLS	57
BEYOND THE WALLS	78
GLOSSARY OF LESS FAMILIAR PROPER NAMES, ETC.	108

JUDAS

EAST OF THE CITY

Jesus had not commanded angel-troops,
Splendidly armed, to flush the night across :
The mute and sombre Mount of Olive gardens
Thrills not with tramp of hosting apparitions,
But in the dark ravine some yellow torches
Flicker above a close-packed shuffling crowd
That hale in bonds to the town their should-be king.
Clambering low walls, plunging right and left
Toward silent byways and new self-possession
The select friends of Galilee's Messiah
Make off like thieves disturbed ; while Judas dazed,
Near the oil-press, by their thwart faces taught
That eleven minds indelibly are stamped
With treason's image featured like himself,
Feels he can no more sort nor fare with them,
Yet with his master at the worst can die :—
So that way starts to follow on weak knees
Stumbling along the blind road. Where its turn
Reveals the bridge, the city and the gate
Through which the last few of the captain's band
Crowd ere it close, there almost on him leaps
With rapid straining limbs and streaming hair,
Silhouetted against Jerusalem towering
Brilliant with moonlight,
A young man naked, who in terror whoops,
Then from him springs, and over the right-hand wall
Vaults, crashing through thin boughs, and pants away.
Scared, Judas crouches, then sees the gate close
And the city, like an hostile vision having
Devoured his great friend, confronts his love,—
Implacable, malignant and serene.

Under the corner of a walled-in yard,
On the shadowed side of the steep moonlit road
That here slopes to the bridge, beggar-like Judas
Huddles, yet searches through his brain for help.
To-morrow being the first day of the feast

Jesus cannot be tried for full nine days :
Manifest Messiah, will he then drive the rebuked
Sanhedrim from their seats ? Or even to-night
Repent his mildness, break his prison and, joined
By all who love, nay, all who would have loved
Had they but heard his teaching, through that gate
Resistlessly issue. Why, this may be " his hour " !
And now some just man, lodging at an inn,
Be roused from slumber ; a voice called : a voice
Directs. Hands unseen lift curtains. Of themselves
Doors open. Mute, wondering, enraptured men
Congregate through the streets.
Captained by seraphim,
Marshaled by Jesus,
They pass out over Kedron.
He leaps up, joins them, climbs
And as they reach the hilltop helps their choir
Salute the first morn of the Father's reign.
Yet !
If Jesus be Messiah, not self-deceived,
His every word has weight : and lately these :—
" The Son of man must die first." Judas groans ;
For had he let them weigh earlier that night
None of this woe had overwhelmed a heart
Too wretched to trace his alienated life
Through trials sequent on his Master's death.

Pained recollection from an hour ago,
That mutual last kiss throbs back to his lips.
" Friend, wherefore art thou come ? " How strange a
glance
His worn eyes gave me then ! Read he the whole
Hurt record of my heart ?—" Is it with a kiss
That thou betrayest the Son of Man ? " Ah, what
Must the eleven make of words so cruel ?
Could love with insight speak them ? Did he know,
Or merely speculate about my thought
As I of his ? Was that assurance feigned
Which turned on scuffling Peter with the words
" Thou believest I can pray my Father now
And that he instantly would send to me

More than twelve legion angels : why wilt thou
Then quarrel with event which I accept ? ”
Two mornings back when Scribe and Pharisee
Shamed, silenced by his parables, would have
The Temple guard arrest him, his eyes flaming
Had dared them to it, as, through the admiring crowd,
He quit the courts. When I rejoined him later,
He paced erect, alone beneath those ramparts,
Murmuring and smiling to himself. O'er what ?
Thus had his eyes laughed too when he had bidden
Those warning him 'gainst Herod “ Tell that Fox
Full time has been assigned the Son of Man
To perfect all his work.” Thus royal, why
At other times of stress was he submissive
And patient past all bearing with ? Baffled
Of outcome from his thought, gnawing his hands,
Exasperated, Judas ached to own
The consequences of his wrath and pride.

Abased himself, it pleased his Jewish mind
To muse how Solomon's city opposite
When trumpets should declare God's Kingdom due
Must lose that calm stability and fall ;
By earthquake or celestial peers of Samson
Tumbled to ruin, or else, burnt out and by
The hurricane swept up (as some have written
Whose stylus ran on through oracular trance)
Light as a cinder, sail the last dread storm
And, monumental shell of rebel rule,
Strand amid silence of the calcined south.

Scrolled prophecies that slip from sleeve to sleeve,
Where seemly scribes salaam to Roman pomp
But mutely pray Messiah's clarion sound
And herd the eagle-bearers from the land,
Had been his study ere he came to John
Who then baptized crowds strange on Jordan's bank.
His mind, still rich with visions hugged in youth,
Conjures the waited city ages since
High in the azure, roomy and prepared
Till it, like homing ship that makes her port,

Steer down in tranquil beauty on to Zion.
And gladly Judas contrasts the symmetry
Of bastion crystalline, squared gate and tower
With the irregular gauntness of those walls
O'er which the white and gilded temple glimmers
Left of abrupt Antonia's monster cube ;—
The castellated Roman citadel
Compact with threats, charged full with alien foes.
To his gaze drowsed and half hallucinated
The menace of weight raised up so high grew real :
For the moon drifting south
Has emphasised those eastward-fronting cliffs
Of masonry till shadow and cast shadow
Project their massiveness. He leaps to run :
Let God but shake the hill, those coping slabs
Might fall on him. The steep road checks his haste,
And crossing to the wall that bounds it north
He leans, looks back ; till his quick pulse subside
And, shamed, his soul repicture Jesus' mien,
Mild and uneager for catastrophic change.

The enclosure over-topped by cypress trees,
Beneath whose corner he so lately crouched,
Hides now the golden roof and half the city.
Slanting through walnut boughs
Light from the soaring moon
Laces the road,
Patterns his garb.
Across the ravine
One rising rakes the ashes of a fire.
Hundreds are camped between the whitened tombs
On either side the torrent's track of stones.
Pilgrims have overflowed Jerusalem ;
Many whose friends own gardens on the mount
Sleep with more privacy to right and left ;—
As Jesus with his brethren had intended.
The presence of those unseen companies
Steals over Judas, as thought of his home
Over Arab in the desert's featureless vastness
Propped, dying of drought, against his camel's corpse :
Lonelier he feels than in his life before.

The dust flecked round his feet with lobes of moonlight
Reminds him how those thirty pieces lie
Upon the dead leaves in Gethsemane.
As he repictures how the mocking captain
Counted them, proffered and then cast them down,
He, fascinated, finds the gate, gropes back.
There waits moon-brightened and untouchable
The value set by priests on Jesus' head.
One shekel for each year of his dear life !
" Good coins, as good as any struck in silver,"
As once, referring to the price of love
Brought to him by the Magdalen in tears,
Jesus had said, reproving his bigoted band
For their black brows, yet pleased to note the exception
That Judas' delighted intelligence gave ;—Judas,
Who not for worlds would act on those words now,
Though beggared, without a home, without a trade,
A friend, or hope.
Let no man find or use them ! With his feet
He mounds dead leaves ; then stoops, and with both
hands
Pours them out thickly over those coins accursed :
Brings stones and earth to weight the litter down,
And last treads over the place, weeping like her.

Faster he tramps, crackling small fallen twigs,
Crunching on gravel, and, chilled through, strays among
Old rooty trunks, attentive not to stumble
Though his gaze swim, and eased to have no thought.

With a prolonged and modulated call
Reverberating through the Nicanor Gateway,
In unison the watching priests announce
That day begins—" The sun's first ray has struck
Hebron high-seated in the south"—then horns
Throbblingly boom the news farther afield :
A bugle from Antonia shrill responds
And through the boughs God's house lights like a lamp,
Out-shining the moon that has stolen towards it, and
now
A rayless trifle, fades in azure west,

While like a cloak the shadow of Olivet
Slips noiseless from the towers across the town
And down the city walls. Forth from the trees,
Upon the garden's terrace limit, Judas
Comes and confronts the dawn-regarding shrine
Whose pylon from that vantage breasts her roofs
In stages terraced by her narrowing courts.
How beauteous, how imposing ! Though all else
Be doomed, she surely shall remain a gem
Set in the new, the ethereal Zion's crown !
Could Jesus prophesy of her rare stones
That none should stand above another ? They cost
How many years to quarry, square and place ?
His sober father's life of toil but seemed
A minim of the labour lavished there !

Then gazing south, above where Siloam
And Ophel lie asleep, he watches highlands
With scarred cliffs opened and flooded by the day.
Hears he the distant rumble of a slab
Descending over rubble to some road ?
In that thin tinkle nigh as inaudible
As is the trill of light
Can there be scores of ringing chisels merged ?
Surely they are not working through the feast ?
No, no ; his ear creates those well-known sounds !
There summer on summer drew his childhood out
Which now tells like one single glorious season.
Smoke rises from the quarrymen's caves and huts—
Spies he small figures there ? No, Memory
Vision-like outvies the too distant scene
Till late events, once more impossible,
Lie bathed within far bright futurities :
And he has hope to grow a man for God
Hardy of limb and perfect in the Law,
Amazing men who hate Jews by his valour,
Hearted like his great namesake Maccabæus,
Chief of a handful that holds armies checked.

Once more a child, anxious for mother's praise,
He with full bucket toils up from the well

And, brushing through some dry and brittle canes,
Perceives leaf-fragments floating on his draught,
Stops, tries to fish for them. Alas, in stars
And nebulous lines across the flashing mirror
Dust from his finger-tips derides his pains :
So since has toil to cleanse his life seemed mocked !
And as then from that dark deep leathern vessel
His small intent face startled him, so now
His latest failure stares into his eyes.
Neither for purification nor for thirst
That water served, set by for garden use,
While he went back with empty pail for more.
So has his life since oft been recommenced ;
On marriage, then with the zealots, then with John ;
With Jesus last ; which fairest ends just ere
The angels mingling with a pick of men
Kindle goodwill, clean living, brotherhood,
Forth from this centre to the world's confines,
But ask no help of him.

The road has gathered life : now, the gate creaks
And quickly he behind the oil-press darts :
There lurking, watches advance between the trees
The Maries of Bethany and Magdala.
They stoop beneath or push up low-hung boughs
And seek their Lord. In orange and white stripes
The first ; the other all in brown ; 'twas she
Insisted on this change—vainly, for still
Her physical advantages prevail
But the more strikingly. Amused, his smile
Recalls their rivalry. Because the sinner
Anointed Jesus at a feast, the dreamy saint
Must do so after supper. Defying nature,
Freed from her seven devils, the beauty strives
To play the handmaid to her plainer sister ;
And gentler, the more the other wins of praise,
They both like spaniels wait for their Lord's eye.
“ Strange ! They're not here ! ” with rapid hand and
glance
The Magdalen's wonder eclipses the quiet soul's.
“ At sunrise we left Bethany. Never

Has he set out so early." At these words
Hope dawns upon despair in Judas' heart :
Before their minds are poisoned by the eleven
Let him but tell his story !—then the truth,
To crude suspicion active antidote,
Shall even reconvince reluctant Thomas :
Till he, at one with Jesus' friends again,
Help and be helped, left wiser by these pangs
Than to take any save the lowest place ;
Or, sitting there, impatiently expect
" Friend, come up higher ! "

Ah ! ere he can move

A hail rings out and, o'er the upper wall,
Half-naked James climbs, aproned in a sack
That he has found tenting some tender plant.
With proffered veil to hide the muscular lad
The Magdalen runs.
She never wears
That badge of harlots now, though when in danger
Of recognition by strict Pharisees
Can slip it on. So this is who it was
Passed him last night ! And hope as terrified flies
Now, as he crouches in new consternation,
To glean from James' important face and tones
How from their sinister tragedy is raised
Its curtain of dark hours.
Adjusting the long but narrow yellow veil
About his shoulders, chafing that words being sounds
Must drag and pant behind indignant thought,
That " Son of Thunder " bobs his shock-head fast.
Both women spit : the Iscariot
Is branded by his kiss.
Who'd listen to the lips that shaped it ? Ah !
Peter's and Matthew's voices near the gate
Endoctrine others. They at his crime exclaim :
The nearer knot moves towards them and then all
Gesticulating crowd back to the road.

As one dropped down before an elephant,
When some Eupator wars with a Maccabæus,

Shaken hears plod those huge amorphous feet
And waits for instant death, so Judas lay—
Was trampled under the weightless hooves of shame ;
Longed to die crunched, but still unhurt must ache.

With unemphatic patience plants and stones
Med'cined his anguish. Light cloud laced the sky,—
A gentleness to revive the Son of Man
In his wrung soul. That look which had considered
The lilies of the field came back to mind.
Disputed from within by opposites
Of subtle influence potent though occult,
Judas with dark hand crumbled chalky loam
And overwhelmed therewith a tiny weed,
While condemnation and acquittal heaved,
Words without voice, athwart his prostrate mind :
So a tent-curtain swinging lights or glooms it.

He taught the crowd better than James or John ;
Their master owned he did : yet they at supper
Couched on his left and right hand, though they'd dared
Arrogate thrones to themselves so placed in heaven ;
And Peter lay next John, Andrew next James.
Only in trust Judas came first, or when
His comprehension mid eleven frowns
Of dull perplexity smiled : yet always
If Jesus sought retreat among the hills
He must be spokesman, must decide and lead.
While such injustice raised sin up from death,
'Twas hard to free " the kingdom " in his breast.
Look at young John : his curls and downy chin
Were pretty, doubtless like those intense eyes.
But John's heart was too small to hold his hate
Though Judas choked his down.
Last night there on the roof
Outside the guest room, as the twilight faded,
He stood some minutes to compose his mind.
The busy day had gone
Preparing the paschal lamb, attending priests :
No Galilean could so well fulfil
Punctilious prescription.

Yet what must *he* hear as he put aside
 The doorway mat, but Jesus' voice insisting
 "He is our brother" to John's "He is a thief!"
 Then silence, while each gave and each received
 The soft lip-printed seal. Yes, hate convinced
 It kissed a villain, cowed by Jesus' lead,
 Had, lying, aped that signal love invented
 When on self-revelation wholly bent.
 Could he stay with them? Could Jesus with them eat?
 Nay, not while they were thus. The Master rose,
 Stripped him, and bound a towel round his loins,
 Poured water in a basin, knelt to Peter.
 "Thou art Messiah! Wilt thou wash my feet?"
 —"Thou canst not understand yet?" Simon rose
 Protesting "Nay! Thou must never wash my feet."
 —"Unless I do, thou canst not walk with me."
 Then, throwing off his coat, had Peter cried
 —"Nay, wash hands, head and all!"
 —"The feet suffice, for they must choose the way."
 Then while all watched dumbfounded, he to each
 Knelt, and with care cleansed every grimy foot,
 Saying "Ye call me Master, and do well.
 Yet not as earthly kings and lords I act;
 They judge and enforce; it is their chief concern:
 Give all *your* thought to find out ways to serve."
 How Judas loved those teaching kind wet hands!
 While all less admirable objects fled
 Far from his mind. Then suddenly, with mute
 But plain "Thou thief!" John's thunderous gaze
 caught his;
 And Jesus saw him wince, and glanced at John with
 "So one must needs betray me even to-night!"
 And the young man blushed crimson.

Judas had hoped

A year-old memory caused John's blood to show;
 And had himself recalled a March hill-side
 Gay with a crowd of scarlet tulip cups
 Whose thin stems merely hazed the light grey soil.
 There Jesus sate shaded by almond bloom,
 While his disciples, as they lay around,

Felt his heart singing choral through their own.
 In every soul, he taught, a little lad
 Sits, meek as in a school the youngest learner :
 Him older boys would lead astray, and plague
 His innocence. These prompt the man's life ill :
 Some one or more betray him every day.
 At times the tongue, anon the heart ; not always
 The greedy, scapegoat-senses, but the proud
 Reason and ethereal aspiration fail. . . .
 And Jesus ended with
 " Each man of us can in himself alone
 As various counsels hear as we each should give,
 Were ye not led by me as I by God.
 For, without me, ye were but men dispersed,
 Each botching a dim life : so minds not ruled
 By their best thought are thwarted in themselves.
 Teased to undo wrong done the day before,
 By many hopes confused, such minds soon let
 Those strivers for small gains combine their lusts
 And jealousies to smother their best thought."
 More recently he said " I chose ye twelve
 And one a devil " ; of late to Peter crying,—
 " Get thee behind me, Satan ! "
 Yea, may such scenes and words
 Have deepened young John's blush,
 Who kept his eyes from Judas the whole time
 They gathered round the table for the psalms
 Which Jesus first recited, yet soon had bidden
 Nathaniel chant the rest. Pallid and worn,
 Eyes closed, he then stood in the candlelight.
 A gust heaved up the southward window's curtain,
 And those tired eyelids lifted as it flapped,
 And he, like Judas, saw beneath blue night
 Those high-heaved uplands over Bethlehem
 Stretching towards Hebron, and seemed to find relief.

When all lay round the table to eat the lamb,
 Peter, who had not understood those words
 " So there is one betrays me even to-night ! "
 Must pester John with questions ; whose reluctance
 Rumped his bushy eyebrows, beard and pate

With clumsy doubts even blacker than themselves.
 At last the young man, leaning on Jesus' breast,
 Feeling full-pardoned in being allowed that place,
 Asked him "Thou fearest no traitor among us now?"
 The reply came sad and troubling "Yea, though he
 Dip sop with me, he hugs his treason still."
 As all were dipping, Jesus charged them all.
 Each nursing his discomfort, they kept mute
 Till Simon Peter blurts out "Lord, is it I?"
 The others followed suit; soon all had asked
 Save Judas, who then, vexed to be the last,
 In pointed silence had to chime in late;
 And only then came the grave-toned reply
 "Though the lips question, yet the heart must know."
 Their eyes then met, the Master's and his own.
 Now Judas, when resenting John's young haste
 To think himself so soon secure from fault,
 Had clenched his fist: this Jesus marked and smiled
 "Do quickly that thou doest!" How could he
 (That stripling's head there pillowed on Jesus' breast)
 Oust anger quickly? Yet he quit his couch,
 Proud that his master so appealed to him,
 Or trying to be proud at least for that.
 Light from the room stretched his lean shadow out
 Across the flagged roof as he raised the mat;
 He let it fall; felt, heard the wind, and stood
 In the presence of innumerable stars,
 And, to escape worse thought, mused about them.

What are they made of? Silver, gold or some
 Cool kind of fire, some solid form of light?—
 Dust from the yard, swept out upon the night
 After completion of the Eternal's throne,
 Are they but talked of in the gross like sand,
 Or prized among angels each by its own name?
 Their number, thought of thus, oppressed his bosom.
 Men, too, sat there in every lighted room
 Upon those terraced roofs: they thronged Bezetha,
 Starred palaced Acra, crowded Ancient Sion.
 Could even God himself sound all those hearts
 Care-shrivelled, wormed by envious fret? But lo!

The east grows light, preparing for the moon.
“ When its rays strike me I will go within.”
Just then he heard one speaking in the street,
A torch had stopped below. “ This is the house
Where the famed Galilean doctor sups.”
There followed some hushed talk, accented oddly,
Ere one replied “ We thank you, sir, 'tis late ;
We have gleaned little of his thesis yet,
And would learn more before we question him.”
“ Oh, for his doctrine, I know naught of that ;
But he eats Passover here.” God-fearing Greeks
From Cyprus or Cyrene : Judas longed
To put the Gospel to them : it would besides
Excuse his not returning to the supper.
Yielding, he hurries down the outside stair
Across the court to the street. “ Is this the Rabbi ? ”
And he himself explains, offers his aid,
And is accepted. Soon they paced among
The pillars ranked round the five-porchéd pool
On which a rectangle of night sky trembled
Beneath the level of their whispering feet.

His then fine flood of speech refevers Judas,
Whose head rests heavy after that slumberless night
Between dry throbbing palms ; goaded through hot
Rehearsals, his thought's toil finds no relief
Such as a purpose clear for accomplishment
Had brought ; yet fumed, till rise and pace he must ;
Backwards and forwards now, as when be-thronged
By spell-bound hearkeners in resounding aisles,
Under hot sun instead of dark stone groins ;—
Stumbling must dodge mazed branch and rooted trunk
Instead of gliding over well-laid flags.
Yet wonderful words, nay, even new parables
Worthy of Jesus, beat about his brain :
Till that old galling thought of his heaves up
Like sin, like madness, like despair, like fate.
Cheered by his generous admiration, had not
His master's soul waxed grandly, which before
Perhaps surpassed his own but by some thoughts
That a more comely presence helped him to,

Winning an easier deference. When Thomas
And Joses first entitled *him* their Rabbi,
He too felt thrice the man he was before.—
Instead of giving himself and them, could he
But have gained other ten
What force his soul had wielded !
Diseases had obeyed him, even death.
Invulnerable, worshipped, he would have seized that
hour
Not faltered it away,
When the branch-waving multitude's hosannas,
Comparing Jesus unto Mordecai
With Purim joyousness,
Brought victory in sight.

He gains the gate, and scans the road. Deserted ?
No ; something moves down there ! A man in white
Scarce visible against the glaring dust :
Yes, back turned on the festive city's drone
Slowly he mounts, but Judas runs to meet him,
Notes the small pick-axe dangling from his girdle,
And, recognising an Essene, halts ;
Then with profound salaam addresses him :
“ Thy mien would win from me due reverence
Though I knew nothing of that austere rule
By which thy sect fulfil the perfect law.
Up near Tekoa my father, sir, dressed stone
And was, but for my mother, an Essene ;
He worked with them—with thee ? Simon ben Ezra ? ”
Scarce pausing to divine the negative
Judas went on “ Fear not ; I am unwashed
But will not touch thee. Doubtless thou hast heard
Our rulers cast in gaol last night a man,
Peer of the ancient prophets ; many hold,
In him the promises will be redeemed.”
Plodding his upward way without a pause,
While Judas took his pace, the old man said,
“ The unclean dregs of towns perforce are fooled
When priest and doctor of the law reject,
In order to retain their butcher's trade,
Commandments that perfect and supersede

Those given Moses, who had angered God."
 Cold cinder to such fanning, Judas continued
 " Jesus of Nazara, the man I speak of,
 Threw in their very faces Jeremiah's
 ' God's house is in your eyes a robbers' den ' ;
 Yet the word runs—' My house shall for all peoples
 Be called the home of prayer.' " " ' Shall be ' is well,
 While round their altar thieves officiate,
 Their pinfold courts forbidden to God's saints :
 ' Heaven is my throne
 And earth my footstool.
 Why should ye build me an house ? '
 Ha, ha ! and of them it is written beside
 ' He that killeth an ox is as he that slayeth a man,
 He that burneth incense as he that blesseth an idol ' ;
 Yet still they hope that He who said ' Not blood ;
 Repentance and clean hands,' can dwell in shambles !
 Where's thy mind wandered ? Lo ! I waste my
 breath."

That thick-snowed chin beneath those eagle eyes
 Seemed thrust at Judas from a dream : his mind
 Intent on introducing parables
 Such as last night flowed from him with success,
 Is torn two ways between this angry foe
 Of priests and blood-drenched altar, and a picture
 Which shows the Son of Man asleep at sea ;
 The other faculties beside themselves,
 That proudly managed the bark till this squall burst
 And those black hills of water towered above
 Their tattered sail and snapping ropes. " Awake ! "
 At length they cry, " we perish else ! " and he,
 A child for meekness in man's swarming heart,
 Arises and rebukes their terror.
 But here a thought struck Judas like a lance :
 When my ship wrecked last night, was he already
 Tombed lifeless in my breast, though I spoke well
 And roused him from his sleep in heathen Greeks ?

Suddenly, there again
 Is that tanned face and stubborn hoary beard !

Those eyes now fear he is possessed, or else
Would pounce on him like vulture upon offal.
So Judas shook himself, gulped and resumed
“ The man I spoke of, Sir, knotted a scourge
And drove the bullocks from the Temple pens,
Upset the changers’ tables and turned out
Those who sold doves.”

“ I heard of it, but all returned next day,
And your half-prophet came and saw them there
But lacked that wrath which made him great before.
Look, see their booths beneath those cedar trees
Where the too ample trade in blood and fat,
For which their Temple was not roomy enough,
Has overflowed. Yea, we, like Samuel, hear
A bleating of flocks and lowing of herds from thence :
Annas and Saul—two men, one sin, one judge ! ”
Lean, brown, an arm’s rage is thrust sunward up,
Accusative, appellative, vindictive ;
Shrinks back in the white cloak as suddenly
While from those toothless gums the imperious mumble
Rounds on that thick smoke which offends the sun
Carrying taint of small flesh parts to Him
Who owns the cattle on a thousand hills.
“ Wait, climb a few steps higher : we shall o’erlook
The Dead Sea shored about with sulphur and salt
Beneath whose heavy wave there lie becrusted
Charred bones of temple and palace. Yet those dogs
Whose merchandise is Death—who insult God,
Though they might see it from their turrets, dare
Dream his arm shorter or his judgment changed.”

Judas but half heard ;
His haunted brain was striving
To hale back distant thought that seemed to have sailed
Like that once lacy cloud, which now in bands,
Each whiter than the one beneath it, piles
A wall behind the west, leaving the zenith
A blue as deep as blood is red, as vacant
As his parched mouth that aches for eloquence.
Chuckling at his abstraction, the Essene
Quickened his pace : the road was easy now.

Dazzling, unwall'd, it heaved across green swells
Of barley land to Bethany : and Judas
Stopped dead by shame to have failed to impress a man
Whose righteous mind was waiting for Messiah,
Whose distancing back is ruthless with contempt,
With burning cheeks confronted the open east
And south, immense with ranges and ravines
All barren stone.

On iridescent Moab

Gebal was blotted out in dun trailed smoke
Above which a cloud range of infinite snow
Breasted the blue, but dwindled lower southward
Until it joined that opaque white wall west.
In spite of this grand spectacle, his ear
Treasured that laugh which brought him to a halt.
Its hollow guttural gathers volume, expands
As though such hoarse derision elemental
Could occupy the whole of azure space ;—
As though the laughter were not furlongs off ;
As though it reached him from some host aloft,—
That army of Azazel not yet defeated
Though Jesus saw their chief,
Like lightning, fall from heaven.
But no ! It is the city roars : and turning
He sees her roofs mapped round the Temple courts ;
And in the street that leads to Herod's palace
A tumult of ant-like men seethes and is loud ;
As though Jerusalem, a crinkled shell
Far from the shore and dry as scorched stone,
Still held imprisoned ocean's thundrous wash.

Scanning it whole from Olivet's high shoulder,
Judas, in thought sweeping the past, picks out
House opposite the Temple's west façade ;
A haunt of his ere John began to preach.
There, treading soft on sawdust in the shop,
Young Jews and Rabbis zealous for the law
Round Seth ben Caleb's workbench loved to meet.
Oft he went there, when noon drove him from work ;
The glare from Xistus' pavement was cast up

Beneath a tent cloth anchored to stone weights,
Which shadowed all to within a yard of the ground.
Thus light reflected from the sun-smit flags
Would make familiar faces strange to friends,
And search the rafters of the floor above
Till saw and banded awls, hung under shelves
Stacked with rare woods that scented the hot air,
Seemed pendant to a net of crankéd shadows.
That excellent joiner was a very rose,
Not with gilt flies bethronged, but gifted men.
Though short and spare, some charm like a tall giant
Kept others round him while he drilled and planed.
He'd captured Judas as the Temple will
The eyes of pilgrims, who, due at their homes,
Yet linger gazing, till mere hunger drive
Their most unwilling feet along the road.
So the young man would maybe miss a meal
Rather than lose some thought that, like a bird
Which leaves a feast to sing on a bare bough,
Might quit that bush of unkempt hair for him.
Thus Judas with his heart's whole warmth believed
That, leagued with Rome, the Sadducees were pagans.
Ben Caleb's finger ran up the smooth edge
Of slips of wood, while pithily he paved,
With as much ease it seemed, a broad straight way
From present discontent to times ahead ;
When only men as good as they and he
Would till the soil, and hail God morn and eve
From the house-top,—tall sons about them grouped,
Glad law-revering hearts
Uncowed by priest or foe
From Dan down to Beersheba.
The sun-soaked tent-cloth's sombre glow set off
That ruffled mane now tossed to wing a thought,
Now bowed intent above nice dove-tailing.

One day the drone outside surged in a roar
While half a dozen hands made haste to free
And hoist that blind, maddened till they might learn
The wherefore of such boist'rous glee and scorn,
Which rose from frequent lull to louder gust.

Before the blazing white of Temple and bridge,
 Invading the paved place, a mob was seen ;—
 Men veiled like women, women girt like men,
 Dancing the Purim revels ten days late.
 Curtailment of this feast, nay, the suppression
 Of its most heathen features, had been won
 So hardly by just men. Yet Sadducees,
 To use the rabble's weight against the pious,
 By agents had deliberately roused,
 Like mud that clouds up in a limpid cistern
 When ill-intentioned rascals stir the depths,
 All that to Israel's reproach resembled
 The unseemliest festivals of pagan towns.
 In tinsel pomp bedizened garishly,
 On a ramshackle mule that showed its teeth,
 Jibbing in terror, a gaol-bird Mordecai
 Sat self-complacent, while a convict Haman,
 Haggard and dogged, led the brute on foot,
 Crowned too, but in derision with spiked thorns,
 And throttled by a scarlet cloak tugged back
 By grabbing hands whose owners meant to wear
 A shred of it for trophy.
 Two other naked rogues brought up the rear,
 Whipped on to fetch three crosses from the Romans ;
 For three must die if one be thus set free.
 Then as Ben Caleb's party wailed aloud
 And tore their clothes in horror at the scene,
 The grinning felon struck the wretch who led him,
 And pointed towards the shop and came to filch—
 Villainous usage righteously put down
 Though winked at by an infamous High Priest.
 Some bullies charged them, tossed poor Seth aside,
 And, jeering at the protests of his friends,
 Bade that coarse mummer choose and help himself.
 A box of sandal-wood to hold tall scrolls
 Inscribed with the whole law, stood on the bench,
 Finely inlaid with chequers, ebony
 And pearl, the cost enhanced by months of toil.
 He seized it : and his mule in turning round
 Smashed a fair panel leant against the wall.
 When Judas saw him half across the pavement,

Triumphant, with his prize hugged in his arms,
The blood that boiled within him blurred his sight.
He felt himself hurled through the mob, and found
His fingers tangled in that ruffian's beard,
While both were rolling under the stamping mule :
A crash . . . when thought
Within an upper room began again
A white-haired lady stooped down over him
To lay a dripping bandage on his brow ;
For wealthy women pity wounded men,
Are even clubbed to furnish myrrh and wine
To stupify those crucified by Romans
(Who care naught though their victim linger days
Before he cease to feel the pain that kills him).
So this Herodian dame had had his body
Fetched from the pavement out of the noon sun.

Spurred by these recollections to swift strides
Judas had climbed yet higher on the crest,
Among the cedars, past the cattle booths.
It lightened in his mind with memories
Searching those days when first he left his wife,
Admiring Seth, then John, ere he loved Jesus.
That crooked street's throat gargling with its crowd
Made him suspect new Sadducean outrage
Coincident with Passover this time,—
Proof of their greatly swollen insolence.
The baser sort were never reconciled
To a mild Purim, kept by gifts exchanged,
Or brought to the poor door with studied smiles
By those whose fare is sumptuous every day.
Some Mordecai should be living now
Who, though a strict observer of the law,
Could lure the sceptre from Tiberius' hand
And rule his proxy ; yet, at the same time,
Be deputy for God.

The day on a sudden glooms, the great trees creak ;
Boist'rously round his knees his tunic flaps ;
He glances east : the prospect yawns obscured
Like fathomless smoke in Tophet's mouth, through which

The Dead Sea gleams far down like a grey stone.
The storm that late hid Gebal travelled hither !
He had been so abstracted with his thoughts
As not to note the giant-paced onslaught.
His legs are stung with grit, weed and herb cower,
All tender green is torn from bough and bush :
He wades in eddying fritter and dust ; the fury
Drives the brown cedar needles like a tide
Along the hill top toward the still fair north.

The wall and high roofs near the Joppa gate
Crust over with parti-coloured swarms of folk,—
Like blighted tendrils blacked by atomies
That visibly pullulate in gummy sloth ;
Heedless of all behind them, avid to watch
In that last fringe of the departing sunlight
The crown of Golgotha defiled with crosses ;
O nation accursed, unconscious of thy doom !

Two come up dark against high ground that still
Shines to the west. Exactly as he feared
That debased pageantry has been gone through,
And Jews rejoice to please a righteous God
By trampling on his statutes.
There snaps a cedar bough ; a booth falls flat ;
Judas must crouch beneath a low stone wall
And, choked with sand, thence watch
The brown blast strike the town.
Lo ! the hill rumbles ; the altar's towering smoke,
Laid level on Antonia, breaks and wreathes
That granite fort with feeble snaky arms.
Between those planted, Haman's cross slopes up.
Borne out from the huge Temple pylon the veil,
Its heavy tissue like a furious life,
Strains now and struggles as for liberty.
From the Holy of Holies the spirit sublime rides forth
Horsed upon cherubim ? All its refulgent pureness
In cloud and darkness compassed impenetrably ?
Is this that last dread storm and final wrath ?

Can war now darken heaven ? the loyal smite

Those Azazel or Lucifer deceived ?
Black blades on white mail clang until Jehovah,
Emptying rebel breasts of deputied courage,
Pour out the wine of knowledge from those hearts
Which thought to know themselves, yet knew not him ?
Will angels soon, like olives from a tree
Men shake with poles, come clattering down ?
Then, when the clouds part, freeing azure height,
Will Jesus in a twinkling manifest
The light, the health, the future of true men,
Be hailed Messiah ?—seraphs his legionaries,
His friends to thrones promoted, his betrayer . . . ?
Suspended in anguish, thought must break off here.

The hurricane thickens, blackness domes the noon,
Though north and west ajar shine silverly.
Through the red sand-squall, lurid the city looms ;
And Judas crouching, throat and mouth parched,
throws,
With spirit desperate as Absalom's in his flight,
Loose rein on the neck of thoughts that abjectly
Run so on water and fruit, he all but scents
Pulp full-juiced and dripping ;
All but sees wink cooled-wine.
Yet under this tyrant lust his silenced soul
Craves news of Jesus always ; as Dives must,
Dead and in torment, beg to hear of lives
Left in the lurch through his complicity.

When darkness traplike shut down on the north
The blast that hurtled up the Kedron thinned,
And buildings grew distinct beyond its gulf
Lit fitfully by flame from the fanned altar,
Or starred with lamps less numerous than by night.
Then, then, at last though slowly
In the sable zenith graded umber spreads
Where through vast swirlings swims a tiny disc
Of dirty white ; dims, brightens, dims—

The sun !

The farther walls show up, swept clean
Of every odious gaper upon death ;

The all-pervading violence abates,
And Judas may stand up, uncramp his knees,
Down between fields of lodged rye bound, and plunge
Through feathery olive groves, leaping low walls.
He soon is on the road, crosses the bridge
And, panting, climbs the paved slope through the Gate
Tunnelled in Cyclopean rampart bases,
Halts at Bethesda, enters, stoops and drinks,
But even that pure pool, sullied, tastes of grit.
Wiping his beard, he stares round on the sick
That last night huddled in corners here or there
But now for shelter crowd the southern cloister.
On up that steep street broken by frequent steps
And, save for oven-heat, lonesome and gray
As winter dawn. Hardly were he surprised
To find a cherub at each sentry's post,
The Roman dead at his feet.

At length he met

Sightseers hurrying back from the execution ;
Old men alone, young men by fives or tens,
Women in twos or threes under one cloak.
He lets them go by, dreading
To hear on casual lips with laugh or jest
Words, that archangels standing before God
Would stammer, though commanded to pronounce ;
In abject panic lest he let a crowd
Of lurking, congregating, cloaked suspicions—
Approximations to the apprehension
That Jesus has been Haman—burst the bolts
Of his locked mind. They, like an army, now,
With countless unimportant yet distinct
Intents to hurt and ravage and destroy,
Besiege his dull, sullen and vacant soul,
That has no notion how it gathered there,
No inkling how the thing can be, that host
Declares has been.
“ Jesus bar Abbas, Mordecai,”
He caught those words
And tottered 'gainst a wall, dizzy with joy.
Was Jesus, Son of the Father, Mordecai ?

Have his friends meekly triumphed through the marts
Indifferent to that licence granted them
To snatch from stall and shop ?
Or has he purged the Gentiles' Court once more ?
He claps a hand upon a passing shoulder :—
“ Tell me the news. . . ! ” “ On Haman's gibbet, Sir,
Hangs Galilee's Messiah ! Fools have thought
That out of Nazara could come a prophet !—
His mother's not his father's son to boot ! ”
Judas heard every word and tone of scorn :
But there had intervened
Between his brain and eyes
A hot soft gloom ; in it he clutched this thought,—
The Father planned this—this for His Son's death !
The obstruction passed, and he could see once more
The man who told him and another man.
Both stared at him as on the stricken of God.
All was shut out again. “ His Father's will ! ”
He shrieked with laughter ; while a hot close steam
Rose through his shirt's neck, spread up o'er his face
Like a dark closely fitting hood of wool.
Aslant out from one heel his body sloped,
Swung round through half a circle ; then his head
Struck the house-wall he lately leant against.
He heard the sound and dropped, and, forehead prone,
Saw several pairs of feet a skirt of gloom
Cut off above the ankle, walk a floor
That vainly tilted as though to tip them off ;
For perpendicular they trod it still.
And then that darkness blotted out those feet.

WEST OF THE CITY

“Those eyes, from caverns in that fine shock head
Now fallen on thy shoulder, still yearn haggardly
Upon that naked cross.

I know, poor thief, the Haman who hung there
Was rare and gracious.”

Judas spoke crooningly : he was alone.

A Roman sentry nearer to the gate

Mended his sandal on a shelf of rock

That cropped out lower on that slope which bones

Garnished, rather than the few stunt weeds

That fought wind-shelved moraines of flint and dust.

So tender were the sky and paling hills,

The fortified city, as to their mood subdued—

Blank wall and tower, like a frail curtain hung,

And the hid depth and breadth of jumbled roofs

Though near, yet seemed indefinitely remote.

Even corpses broken-kneed, feet pierced, hands pierced,

With dislocated loins, set up like trees,

Looked solemn, not grotesque.

Yet jammed like levered winch

Conviction held him that in space and time

Virtue has no protection against those

Whose blind and rabid clutch slips on smooth power,

That rod of iron snatched from hand to hand

By priest and king and party,

Though each in turn

Bruised, numb, shall let it go.

With bandaged throbbing head held in both hands

Both elbows on his knees, Judas maundered

“Those long curls that no woman’s hand might toy

Solaced thy last gaze : mine was never weary

Of feeding with kind silence the demand

That, forehead down to beard, his features made

For reverent audience : but the best man dies

Even as the worst, poor thief ! ”

The sting with which that last word came from John

With arrow-swiftness here transpierced his thought.

Since Jesus in the Temple praised the widow

Whose alms had been her all, Peter would plunge

Without his left hand's cognizance, his right
 Deep in the bag, and then amaze a beggar.
 Yet that palm-waving day which filled it full
 Had not been followed by like peers, but gifts
 First fell off, then the enthusiasm cooled.
 Judas alarmed must note
 How Jesus, silencing his enemies,
 Disheartened no few friends,—as when he bade them
 Render Cæsar tribute ; or dared boast
 That truths he knew had power to destroy
 The Temple, though 'twas forty years a-building,—
 Nay, to rebuild a better in short space :
 Convincing many that, sorcerer adept,
 He had bought demon help and conned dire spells ;
 Though probably he meant one base heart lifted,
 As he had often raised them,
 Was the choice mansion of the spirit of God.
 Still, prudence while eleven blind hands dipped
 Bade Judas sort the silver from the bag
 And keep it close against the threatening time.
 Young John, on waking yester-morning, hitched
 The wallet off a bough on which it hung,
 And finding copper only, raised a clamour.
 Outraged by Peter's rough hand in his shirt
 Judas had struggled : Andrew pinioned him,
 Whose brother then drew forth the leather purse
 So choked with coin that it fell like a stone
 From the loosed thong's clasp in accusing silence.
 The Master stepped out through the twisted olives,
 (For, early risen, he had withdrawn to pray)
 Stooped and picked it up
 And gave it back to Judas with a smile
 That opened wide the eyes of Jona's sons,
 While Zebedee's two striplings bit their tongues.
 " Glad am I that I emptied all the silver
 From purse to bag once more before their eyes ;
 Gladder I left the wallet in the room
 On quitting them at supper. . . ."
 Trembling and hot as though they held him still
 Judas on that rapt dead face gazed again.
 " No more than I wast thou a thief, 'tis likely :

No more than he who hung here from those nails ! ”
 Not the first time *that*, John had thought he thieved.
 The poorest head for figures, his surprise
 Was ever punctual when the bag gave out,
 And got confused at once if sum by sum
 Judas gave count of all their outgoings.
 Behind his mind it lurked
 That thirteen to a score
 Should cost for food abroad what four at home,
 His father, mother, self and brother did :
 Till Jesus must sigh, “ Listen, my good John ;
 When I taught thousands in that desert place
 A little bread and fish went far, ’tis true :
 But then, words that were life eked out the food.
 And in a city during a strict siege
 Let one young lad have kept those five loaves whole
 Which mainstay health and joy in the true life—
 Not having misused eye, ear, heart, mind or sinew—
 No man should die, but all renew strength daily,
 And courage grow apace with the dark hour ;
 For life would be their bread.
 Thy pure heart might revive Capernaum
 When she at last foresee and dread her doom,
 Yet not make four cakes twelve.
 Doth not the prophet cry
 ‘ Let him that hath no money buy and eat !
 Why count your pence for that which is not bread ?
 Why labour, to remain unsatisfied ? ’ ”
 And Judas felt, like present weakness, how
 Words may win welcome, thoughts enforce love,
 And goodness make man holier than a temple,
 Yet he be ruined and, like rubble heaps
 Once well-plumbed walls, deride his former beauty.
 “ Thy death caught thee, poor thief, lavishing worship
 Upon the butt of scorn,—even as I used.”

“ Madman, thou gloatest on that filthy corpse
 For all the world as bridegroom on his bride ! ”
 The mocking captain spoke, startling poor Judas,
 Who looked up wildered to find some one near :
 Then saw an arm with sombre menace jerk

Athwart that mild sky which expected stars
 As one awake still, yet begins to dream.
 It took him time before he understood
 That stiff limb had been torn from the near cross
 Hard by the foot of which he crouched. And seeing
 Him cower as though to dodge a blow, "He's dead,
 No fear!" the Captain laughed "Say, did your
 prophet
 Set carrion verily on its legs again?"
 Judas had risen and staggered back some steps
 Before he nodded.—"No! Hast seen him do it?"—
 His mute lips moved. Glad not to hear that "Yes"
 The other sheered off, leaving him dazed to watch
 The Temple-guard, spear wedged behind each wrist,
 Wrench the remaining hands from off their nails:
 Then as each torso forward flopped, they caught it
 Upon crossed shafts held ready;
 Down swung the head, then bounced up tossing,
 With an unmeaning violence, its dark mane.
 The gore-stained feet as brutally prized free;
 From off the staple by a butt-end shove
 The fork was lifted, then
 The legs fell and the body
 Bearing the spear-shafts down, trailed to the ground.

These men, being Jews, had, to avoid defilement,
 Learnt thus to unload crosses with their spears.
 Romans will leave the crucified for weeks
 Not even respecting Passover: besides
 Vultures might carry shreds about the city
 To gorge at points of vantage; nay, might even
 Drop putrid morsels on the altar itself.
 A forest of criss-cross sharp-spiked golden rods
 Too thin and sloped and smooth for bird to perch on
 Protected the sacred roof, but not the courts:
 So that their care deserved well of the nation
 And honoured the Most High.

Behind the knoll

A clattering sound of shovels in stony earth
 Now followed that of picks; a rope was drawn

Under each thief up from feet to armpit,
Then knotted ; and he was dragged away to where
That hole was digging on the knoll's far side.
Thence men with picks appeared ; these loosed the
crosses
Then pushed them over. Romans would fetch the wood.
Their work was done ; their company lined up ;
Night now with all her stars had grown complete,
A silence which ignored the brief commands
Croaked by the Captain, who neared once more and said
“ We have to guard the tomb in yonder garden.”
And suddenly Judas heard the sound of leaves ;
There, to the north beyond the arid rising,
Cypress and juniper filled a hollow up
With black forms thronging right down to the walls.
“ They fear he'll lift himself, or that you others,
Snatching his body, swear that it walked off.”
The speaker then, in an awkward aimless way,
Gave Judas with sheathed sword a jocular prod,
“ So your rebellion's quite snuffed out, I think ! ”
It was not meant unkindly, but, faint for food,
Head swimming, the poor man reeled, fell, and broke
Into strange sobs. The captain shrugged his shoulders :
Detaching four to guard the tomb with him
He gave the rest “ Quick march ” back to their quarters.

The Eternal rules, though not as we desire :
But, as the Sadducees have always held,
With an indifference to individual men
As high as the heavens stand above the earth.
Satan prefers a prophet to plain folk :
The beauty of the lily tempts the hand
That leaves mere foliage growing. Had he not read
How Solomon, nay David, was a king
More like an Herod than this Son of Man,
Who heard a Father's voice within his breast,
And still was gentle as the child he had been ?
Then did he raise the dead ? Was Lazarus dead ?
Had Satan's malice, luring Jesus on
To conflict with those venal priests, tranced both
Their friend and Jairus' child ? It might be. Thus

As hot wind hardens tilled fields, doubt swept over
That deeply harrowed soul, soft after tears.

When the moon rose beyond Jerusalem
He turned, sat up, and stared in her blank face.
The tall tower Phæsalus like an index showed
How fast she really moved.
The shadow of the walls was thrown so far
It welled about his breast like a dark sea
And sharp-edged right and left embayed the knoll :
While as the orb climbed higher
This dark tide rapidly ebbed towards his feet,
Till clad in impalpable brightness he recalled
How Jesus on illumined nights paced out
Long watches, stood in prayer, or from hill brows
Pored over the dear lake,
Dotted with sail and cinctured
With white reflected cities. To the east, woods
Quilted the uplands magically with dream
That held the eye awake as that belidded
Is held by vision : so soft and deep and strange
That far-off forest grey in the silver sheen.
Galilee had a kindness Judea lacked
Such as brought Jesus more friends than himself.

As this last thought traversed his mind, behold
Against those grey walls, up from the black shrubs, rose
John in his striped cloak like a cancelled word
Impatiently crossed out with broad down strokes.
Some way behind, as from the grave, there followed
Women ghostly, fagged out, form after form,—
Three, four, five : a soldier closed the rear.
Nerveless, with lagging limbs, and gowns ungirdled,
With short-lived, sheeplike changes of pace they
straggled.
The man must often wait or wave his spear
To urge their desolation on the path.
The Magdalen, her hair about her waist,
Seemed wrought in silvered gold and, like the blind,
Stumbling stretched forth one apprehensive hand.—
Machinery might so move

An hollow-jointed statue.

Salome next, then Mary of Bethany

Supporting the broken mother, from whose head

Bowed down and muffled there escaped one long

And moonlight-toyed-with strand of snowy hair.

She came and went with step so firm and brisk,

Her closely snooded head held up so stately

Judas had never dreamed her as old as that.

How had that devil-bruited lie preceded

Them out of Galilee, making her son a bastard ?—

Not, like the others, begotten of old Joseph,

Whose grave had not been full a dozen years ?

Last, wholly-enshrouded, some Martha or Joanna,

As a shrub might walk, felt with bare feet her way.

Deject and quivering symbols of his grief,

They as slowly wander towards the towered gate

As imperceptibly wastes an hour of pain.

The soldier having seen them past the guard

On his road back, heaven's wondrous lamp constraining

The youth in him, stopped, turned, and kissed his hand,

As who would send his heart across the city.

But, scandalised at loathed idolatry,

Judas bar Simon rated him for dirt

No son of Israel, a vile Idumæan.

Yet something in that gesture changed his mood

And plunged him eleven years deep in flown time.

At Kerioth his father had bought land,

Sent thither wife and son to tend the plot

And shape a home for his approaching age

While yet he laboured on at dressing stone.

Judas was then fifteen, well-grown and proud

To toil for hire, keep himself and learn

At the same time to work his father's ground,

While giving half of each week's wage to Obed

Whose daughter would be ripe for marriage soon.

How Merab laughed, sewing a piece a week

On to her scarlet wimple, while with pride

He told how from a kerchief nothing like

So thickly sewn he had been taught to sum.

His mother's daily earnings were but halfpence ;
She baked for other quarrymen or ground wheat
And so could rarely add a silver coin.
But often Merab's father gave half shekels,
And her hard-working suitor never failed,
So that her cloth was like a well-filled fold,
Or like Seth's charted square and straight-laned city
Wherein each man shall be both priest and king.
Obed ben Tallit died, her elder brothers
Conveyed her to Jerusalem. He had seen
Neither his money nor his bride again.
Resurging even now his indignation
Traverses prostrate body and spirit in waves
As heads of foam would run the rain-bleared lake.

Hereafter had come weary years of torture
When oft he starved or over-drove his body
That, now mature, was cumbered with its seed
Ready to plant where it alone can grow.
His eyes at nightfall oft were glued to scrolls
Till in between them and the unread words
Glid like a vision and absorbed his sense
Place where a woman might be found alone—
Some low-browed cavern on those scorching hills ;—
Therein his dream would crawl to strip her naked.
He then leapt up and hurled the useless prophet
To a far corner, overset some gear,
Frightened his mother drowsing o'er her loom,
And rushed forth, striding from the valley up
Until he found such solitary cave
Empty and cold beneath the starry night,
Would fill it with loud peals of scorn and leave :
Or else, pretending his day-dream came true,
Committed in shame the semblance of the sin
That so had tempted, then slunk back self-soiled
And self-disgusted, like a well-thrashed cur.
Thereafter followed weeks so strictly lived
To win to sainthood might look a sound hope
Yet soon would prove as frail as empty egg-shell.

His mother counselled, and old Tuach argued,

Till he convinced had taken to wife a damsel
Well portioned but with more years than himself.
Erelong, his mother dying, he was left
With Sara only, always good but always
Sullen because of Merab in his heart.
And both grew certain that her womb was barren
When five more and more threatening years had been
Piled up like anger in a demon's mind,
Who waits the foreseen failure of all control.

To Kerioth business brought the zealot Rufus
Who captured Judas with Ben Caleb's thoughts.
Sara abed, they would sit long in talk :
Yet when he joined her, sleep he never could
Until both fevered hands had drawn her close
To whom his tongue refused kind words by day.
She, cowed by law and custom, yielded that
Which he felt love alone could rightly ask.
Weakly accepting that pride would have scorned,
He loathed his flesh and hers, despising himself,
And, after words, had left both wife and home
To follow Rufus to the Sacred City,
No longer as a pilgrim for a feast,
But keen to start life fresh and better planned.

He soon was one who loitered round Seth's bench
And kept himself by jobbing in those gardens
That girdled walled Jerusalem with green,
Closing and opening sluices to distribute
Water from the aqueduct through a thousand ditches
And beautify that town of tombs which ringed
The humming centre : thus Herod the Great had bidden
Even the place of mourning flower and flourish.
Anon he whitened tombs against the feasts,—
That those who camped among them might avoid
Defilement by unwary contact, and be saved
Long tedious cleansings. Yet the while he worked,—
E'en oft-times while he heard Seth's voice compare
Jerusalem with the heaven-treasured Zion,
His soul pursued him as centurion
Some raw recruit who, maddened, has deserted,

To send him back contrite for Sara's pardon.
But always imagination interposed
Pictures too vivid of the life they led.
Although she sent him word she had conceived
He thought it some vain hope, or else a lie
To fetch him home and lessen her reproach.

Such recollections stood athwart his life
As formidable as these long walls and western towers ;
Phaesalus and Joseph by the gate,
Above the palace gardens Mariamne
And Aristobulus. His weakness pleased itself
Through half-closed eyes a-swim to make their forms
Glide sideways towards the south and then recover
Station and proud stability once more.
Against the night he sets them reeling anew
With a slow ecstatic motion, like stone blocks
Piled upon barges at Tiberias
That slewed round gently on to Jona's ship,—
Mewed in by heavy bottoms during the night
In danger of being crushed as they swung past
With threatening stacks of white sawn stone
That sunk them to the rim-wale. He had waked
To Peter's and Andrew's shouted alarm,
As naked they blundered out their oars,
And, pushing against the wharf side, had sheered clear.

His head so swam that now the city towers
Glid round him ; and now
Seth, Merab, Sara, Jesus,
Unreconciled attitudes expecting response,—
Deed or emotion, glance or smile, they wait
Becalmed or swiftly sail about his soul,
That flutters with fear, now physical, now moral.
So had it quaked that afternoon, when stunned
He had revived and watched the houses drift
Most unaccountably by, blank white, unwindowed,
Inanimate faces that tilt and crowd and heed not
How close he lies beneath their moving bases.
Then dreadfully a man, who saw him stir,
Had seemed to move away from his own legs

And float upon the air to question him
Whether his was the falling sickness, or whether
Some demon had unseated his good mind.
Remembering this, and fearing his swoon's return,
Judas said to himself with shaking jaws
That he must eat or else he would be ill.
And then he turned and lay along his side.
True, now for full two days he had had no meal.
Accused of stealing from the bag, he bought
Less food, and went without himself, in hopes
That Jesus would enhance his abstinence
With marked approval more satisfying than meat.
Thus Judas, starved of praise, pitied himself
And longed for some friendly stranger to admire
His soul and mind that judged themselves too harshly.
No one had ever over-rated him :
Though Thomas and slow Joses, when he first
Had brought them to the baptism of John,
Had styled him Rabbi, and heard him paint the future
As once himself drank wisdom from Seth's lips.
Sara too when first wed sat at his feet
Tranced, while he read Isaiah or expounded.
But Jesus broke the one spell, his pride the other,
That scorned to show his best to a mere woman ;
And he had missed these deferences only
When to rekindle them had seemed past hope.

Southward some half mile, palms in Herod's garden
Topping the ramparts, shivered in the wind,
Shaking their splintered moon-glint against blue Hebron
And those dark swollen uplands 'neath the stars.
Lying on his right side, this serene prospect
Medicined his dizziness ; and there came back
Talk he had overheard, all eyes and ears,
When first he searched Jerusalem for work—
Lewd thoughts that found his weakness quite unfenced,
Though at most other times his flustered zeal
Had hunted them from mind, as long ago
From the tombed gardens he would chivy dogs.
There, walled from sight at foot of those tall trees
Pitched near cool basins, fine pavilions stood

Where princes slept if the heat irked indoors.
 Fate that is roughly breaking him to pieces
 Spoils other men with inexhaustible kindness.
 While he is stretched on flinty Golgotha
 Some delicate woman sleep is obdurate with
 May lie there on soft sward.
 Impossibilities are sweet to frustrate minds :
 Could they but come together, he and she,
 Both might achieve delicious easing slumber.
 He quivers, and remembers being shaken
 Thus when the Magdalen brought dancing gear—
 Combs, veils, fan, tambourine and ointment pots
 With all the gay devices of her trade—
 And threw them down at her new Master's feet.
 The young men, who devoured all with their eyes,
 Had feared to touch : so he and Peter must,
 (Being married) gather the things into a sack
 And take them to the dealers, who with hands
 Of cynical indifference pointed out
 How sweat had soiled the lining of a girdle
 Crusted with shells and hung with little bells :
 And cheapened even that mirror with for handle
 A naked idol, silver inlaid with gold,
 Till the indignant Peter cursed and swore.
 Yet Jesus would not listen to their wrongs
 Though they came back with far too little money.
 Eternally a child ! Or Satan's overlord ?
 Not once could Judas remember having seen him
 Pay tribute of fear either to wealth or woman.
 Straightway his trembling increased its violence
 As though a more eager fever wormed his blood :
 By Jesus yet more than by Merab or Sara
 Was he attracted and repelled at once.
 That voice, those thoughts, that manner drew him near ;
 But he shrank from the schemeless despiser of Fortune.
 No opportunities were ever seized.
 How often had he, frenzied, powerless,
 Seen just the wrong course taken, the hot iron
 Allowed to cool unstruck. Yea, even when
 Time lately seemed to halt and bellow " Now !"
 Jesus impassively walked on, as though

Quite careless when his Father's kingdom came :—
As though he really thought of it as needing
Nothing at all but cups well cleansed within
That it might brim a crowd of private souls,
And knew it never could count in the world
Though palm boughs waved and garments strewed the
way.

Yet he from hid seed looked for tangible harvest,—
Said “ openly ” the Father shall reward :
And what are angels for—the hosts of heaven
With legions at the hail of your brief prayer,
If never, not even against ignominious death,
Their power is to depress the soaring scale
Of the good man denuded, hurt, despised,
That weighs so lightly against fierce pomp and greed ?
But there ! He is dead and ruined, and was mad !

Yet spake of death as nearing : may have known,
Not mentioning them, of both the pageant and cross.
Was it so vain ? That guard set round his tomb ?
Even as a bird apparently dead yet quivers
The wings that never more shall lift her weight,
Judas could feel the excitement of hope revive,
And turned to seek for ease on his left side ;
But, his bruised head preventing this, sat up
And thought, “ Those soldiers will have food with them.
And skilful chat might lead them to be friendly.”
Then a star warrior flashed across his mind
Who with gold-shafted sapphire-pointed javelin
Shattered the sealéd stone, and Jesus came
Stooping from out the tomb ; another winged man
As he stood up laid on him glorious raiment ;
Then all three walked forth from that palsied knot
Of incapacitated lock-jawed guards.
He, Judas, there too, had no power to call
That soul who with his soul engendered life ;
For mouth and tongue were plastered with dry fur,
And though heart-frantic, he could only gasp
Till they had journeyed far beyond earshot.
Still he rejected this improbable fancy
That had seized on his mind like a thing seen :

His one connection with events at large
He knew had severed while he was gagged with fret
About his good name and young John's deserts,
And whether his discontented scheming soul,
Might not, in spite of all, be pre-ordained
Chief usher at Messiah's investiture.
Anxieties that weighed against defeat,
Entailing anguish and death, appeared most mean :
And he mused " No, I will not beg their bread !
Yet why not watch near them, if sleepless I
Must wear this night out, rather than ache here,
Where loneliness magnifies each ageing throb ? "

He rose and, facing northward those dark gardens,
Wavered at first, betrayed by his own knees,
Unnaturally frail and phantom-like,
As though the intense moon rays had worked right
through him,
Perished his sinews, changed his bones to chalk :
Yet soon found he could keep to a straight course
And even resist large puffs of wind, and, once
Among the shrubs, felt less surprise at moving.

A camp of pilgrims steeped in slumber was passed
Wrapped in their blanket cloaks, like sacks of grain
That lie neglected in some dusty loft :
The owner dead, and rival heirs at law,
There, gnawn by rats, they empty towards each end,
And by degrees take almost human shape.
So Jesus might have likened sacks to men
Claimed by the litigant good and evil angels ;
In them truth lies unused, while mildew taints,
Or the pilfering cares of dusty lives rob piecemeal.
And Judas felt his thoughts had worth, and knew
Jesus in him found what no other gave.
They had been brothers, not by condescension
Of him who was the elder and stronger alone
But like in kind. . . . Alas, if He were mad,
How mad that mind proud to resemble his !

What thought has weight if life lack aim, and death

Must close the door on cobwebbed vacancy ?
And Judas stopped, confronting a whited tomb.
It was unguarded, yet his mind was held
Picturing six or eight long-tenanted shelves
Recessed in the hewn corridor, unseen
Save when another horizontal form
Wrapped stiff in clean grave-clothes
And redolent of balm
Is carefully lifted home,—
To wait, crumble, cave in—
Through ages, some believed,
Though most now thought not for so many years.
Are graves indeed God's barns ? Or filled with waste
Thrown forward by ambitions that fell short ?

His ear is soothed with murmur from running ditches
Over which the path passes time to time.
Till with " Who goes there ? " a sentry's brutal voice
Cuts a red wound in moon-drenched silence to bleed
The mocking captain's yawned derision " How ?
Our mad friend ! Pass him."—" So you hope to see
The dead man scatter our wits after your own ? "
Rooted like cypress that a gust fills, Judas
Trembles from head to foot.
A lantern stood beside a broken loaf,
And the strong stench of garlic made him faint :
Behind the food an armed man lay and snored,—
A crescendo of low tones that still broke off
Before they had grown loud.
The red-haired captain with a grizzled ruffian
Had been at play. Outlined by the white-washed porch
Another crouched, his head upon his knees
And wrists crossed round his ankles. He too slept,
For regular breaths stirred through his beard. The tomb
Shone cut in a rough steep of moonlit rock,
But a dense clump of juniper shadowed the men
So that their horny lantern reddened the food
And handfuls of knuckle-bones between the players.
The captain took the bread and held it out :
" Here, help yourself ! Don't shake like a starved dog ! "
" Thank you, I am not hungry," Judas said,

But doubted if the words were audible
 And could not wave refusal with his hands.
 " Catch ! " cried the other, smiling like a fiend ;
 And all at once Judas sat down and caught
 The loaf in his lap, then crushed it on his belly,
 But did not go to break it with his hands ;
 And, staring at the donor, slowly said
 " Why did you want me so to take that money ? "
 " Well, you see Annas said I might give thirty :
 If he must break the law it should be costly."
 " You own he breaks the law ? And yet . . . ? "
 " Say, I
 Defied him, who would profit ? Pilate would,
 And give the winch of conquest half a turn :
 Yet were I to the seventy that last one,
 Annas had rued this judgment through his purse.
 If they dare not resist him, make him pay.
 That they could do, but no ; they lack the spunk.
 Does Moses' law arrest men after sundown ?
 Or during a feast try ? Or execute
 The day of sentence ? Or at Passover
 Stir up a Purim ? Now then, gnaw that crust :
 The prosperity of villains tastes like salt."
 " Yet you, you are his serviceable hand."
 " He turns our foes back at the Temple porches ;
 Not Jews but Romans lately tramped the court.
 He dines with and wheedles Pilate, as Mordecai
 Supped with his dupe Ahasuerus :
 The Most High chose the rascal to that end."
 Judas gasped horrified. " I don't blaspheme :
 As Samson an ass's jaw, as David a pebble,
 He picks up harlot or knave to save his people.
 They're clean enough for cracking heathen skulls :
 Eat, man ! You're famished, eat ! "
 Trembling but resolute Judas tossed the loaf back.
 The captain flashed his teeth, but then laughed
 " Madman,
 No wonder you believe he raised the dead.
 Expect to see him walk out through that slab ? "
 But Judas shook his head like one bemused,
 Then asked " How came you to be waiting me

Last night ? ” “ Listen. The Most High, not priests only,
 Was working to ensnare your would-be prophet.
 When Annas’ order reached me after sundown
 I sent back word I would not break the law.
 Then was I fetched to talk to that old ram
 Who argued, wiping with silk his greasy beard,
 I’d heard this Jesus speak against the Temple
 So was a witness to his blasphemies.
 The holy place is all men see of God ;
 And, world-admired, serves like Moses’ serpent
 In the desert lifted, or like stark naked Isaiah
 In the days when Sennacherib threatened our land,
 To turn the crowd from counsels of despair
 Such as this fellow preached, belittling its pomp ;
 Who were he now condemned by the Sanhedrim
 (Pilate and Herod being Annas’ messmates)
 Could straight be put to ignominious death.
 Let me but find some man who knew his crib
 And go and fetch him in without a noise
 And save the Temple from his sorceries,—
 Or that more certain menace of his tongue
 That sowed disparagement of building and priest
 In dirty ears where it might best find soil !
 What was a wrong done to a Nazarene,
 A Mamzer too, when set against that glory
 Which brought Jerusalem great gifts from kings
 And confluence of pilgrims from all lands ?
 As Balaam was subdued when his ass spake
 So I felt wisdom stand behind this Annas
 As it had been angel invisible.
 But if I doubted at all, when I got back
 And at once overheard you tell those Greeks
 That he was sleeping at Gethsemane,
 I saw God’s finger point me where you led.”
 “ You forced me go with you,—I never led ;
 And if I went ’twas out of hope to save him ! ”
 “ How ? ”

“ By leading you astray.”

And Judas

Felt those anxieties renew their attack,
 Transforming minutes into giant hours

As from the city they crossed the bridge and up ;
 Till, as he headed past the little wicket,
 A staying hand struck on his shoulder again
 And forced him pause to assure this man with lies
 The garden lay much higher on the hill.
 Yet think he must ' Thrice is it God arrests me,
 Showing a path each time I had not dreamed
 Of treading unprompted. First when on the roof
 I overheard those Greeks : next when this man
 Claimed me for guide ; and now
 Stopped when I meant to take them far afield !
 What is he saying ? One of his men is sure
 Gethsemane can lie no farther out.
 He waits my answer with more distrust each minute.
 Do no gates open through the left-hand wall
 That I must stare at this ? They lift the latch
 As though they read my mind. God points the way,
 His hour has come at last ! I hoped it till
 He kissed me, but then knew we both were lost.
 And lo ! the plain fact was that Satan moved
 Himself, this captain, Annas, Jesus, John
 Like chessmen on a board of inlaid chequers :
 Himself and others were moved from white to black
 But Jesus only trod the ivory squares.
 Thus evil seemed endowed with divine wit
 To play with things more worthy than itself ;
 And he loved Jesus with a deep compassion
 He never felt before.
 Tears followed tears ;
 His beard was soaked ; he sobbed.
 Till pitiful that caustic captain said
 " I was a zealot too when you were one.
 I went to Jordan, was baptized. Ha, ha,
 Dipping me could not save Jochannan's head !
 Why did he send you back ? I longed to know."
 And Judas answered like a punished child
 That dares no longer show will of its own,
 " I'd left my wife with words, my father's field
 Untended, and perchance then had a son :
 Therefore he told me to go back for pardon.
 Yet reaching home I found they all were dead.

She with her stillborn child,—my father thrown
From mule while hasting home to fill my place.
Many suspected robbers ; his savings were gone ;
Yet no one knew whether he carried coin.
His head had but one wound, the mule grazed near :
Some said that road-thieves would have driven it off.
I felt God warned me, and returned in sackcloth
And was baptized : then I too preached repentance
And brought John many men to dip in Jordan :
But was not there that day some saw a dove
Descend, more blinding than the blaze of noon,
On Jesus. . . .”

And Judas open-mouthed thought, was all that
Satan’s contriving ? And his mind felt cowed.
“ Ah yes ! ” the other mused, “ He said this Jesus
Would be Messiah,” and Judas “ A man so hailed
By such a saint to die as he to-day ! ”
These anguished accents only provoked a cheery
“ We think too much of men ! What’s the best flesh
Compared with Him whom moon and stars obey ?
I knew a boy

Had seen an angel, tall as city tower ;
And he declared that mighty person’s face
(Although his raiment shone and he was armed)
Was sullen and stupid, like a well-flogged slave’s.”
The speaker chuckled gently to himself
As though he relished insignificance,—
Delighted in the thought of punished great ones,
Charged with their folly, thwarted in their malice ;—
And ranked himself with pebble and ass’s jawbone,
An instrument ready to confound proud Annas
Whose rank was little lower than an angel’s !
And recent liking for him turned to loathing
As Judas watched his callous cynic mask.
Had he accepted thought from such a source ?
He, with whom Jesus spoke brother with brother ?
And a strange hovering fancy bodied itself
How this same captain had nose, beard, eyes
Stature and bearing, voice and mind, like his own,
Only more ugly, as more beetling brows,
Hair redder and more stubborn, rounder shoulders.

It had been sometimes said that he himself
 Was like his master spoiled, less sweetly grown,
 Diverted from that symmetry of grace
 Which an even temper, happier gifts or fortunes,
 In childhood, youth, and prime, fostered in Jesus.
 And Judas rose, convinced of intimate danger
 From close proximity with his warped double ;
 As though perforce his mouth must learn that grin,
 Or he find red oust auburn in his hair,
 And, worst of all, this man's thoughts in the room
 Of those already forgotten, yes, clean gone !
 That he had shared with Jesus. His pulse beat fast :
 His blood so hot the steam rose in his eyes :
 Then suddenly his tongue delivered him.
 " False, false all through, is your pretended zeal !
 Although no Roman tread the outer court
 That sentry is no Jew :
 I saw him kiss his hand to the full moon :
 Yet at your bidding he tramps in and out."

" No Jew ! " the other scoffed.
 " John Hyrcan circumcised his ancestor
 Upon the battlefield. No Jew forsooth !
 His foreskin fell according to the law
 On the eighth day : and he himself reveres
 Our Temple as the finest thing on earth."

" What are you here for ? Does wraith or Prince of the
 Air
 Dread spear or sword ? " jeered Judas " Bah ! Is not
 His crucified body impotent enough ? "—
 " He bragged he meant to walk ;
 And if he does not, then was he no prophet."

" Did he boast ? No.
 But spake in parables and never meant
 Aught that base minds conceive."

" Scold Annas, don't scold me :
 He thinks your living friends might filch his body
 And swear he came to life, and all the fuss
 Grow noisier than before ;
 And need more law-breaking to put it down."

" Strain at a gnat and swallow down a camel !
 Help kill good man for dreams, and serve a priest

Who. . . .”

“Off! Quick march! Clear out! Do you hear!”

Judas fled up that small coombe's northern slope,
Stones crashed among the shrubs; he fell on his hands
And then was struck upon his shoulder-blade.
Doubtless his yellow smock gleamed mid the leaves.
He crouched and moaned, but hearing rapid steps,
Up and strained on, a few last missiles plunging
Among the cypresses on the ridge's crest
As he descended on its farther side.

Wild angers now bestrode his fevered thoughts :
They poured like nomad raiders across some plain
On the congested lives of those in power—
Sadducees, Herodians, Pharisees.
They fell before him as though pierced with darts ;
He stamped and sobbed and hissed his scorn aloud,
And pilgrims camped among the tombs sat up
Staring after his passage through that night
Serenely brilliant, harmonious with large breaths
Which shook the shrubs and let them be by turns,
Through all those mournful gardens of the dead.
On stumbling deep into its dust-filled ruts
He recognised the road from the northern quarries
To the Damascus Gate : and all his life
Tumbled around the poor stone-hewer's child
Like rubble from a blasting—
On failures renewed efforts doomed to fail
Though lured by hopes of some established rule,
A counterpart of that conceived within,—
Which even there was always set at naught.

A stray dog next attacked him, and with barking
Woke other two. He tried with stones to daunt them :
But his right arm seemed strengthless, the shoulder
ached.
Perforce he fell back on cajoling calls ;
Knew his voice could not long deter them ; saw
A chance, and hit the foremost with a stone ;
When all three fled.

His tired body walked on by itself.
His mind was absent and marked not time's flow
Nor whither he was carried by his limbs,
Till lo ! he stood before Gethsemane's wicket
And all his anguish woke as from a swoon.
Ah ! if, last night, instead of entering there
He had seized spear and tried to bar that gate
Fighting the guard till they were forced to slay him,
Dead for his master, had he not achieved
The perfect satisfaction of his soul ?
Blood had oozed from him, chucked behind that wall,
And this intolerable day had been
Peace to last ever.
Though Jesus were no part of God's design,
But just one Jewish martyr more, one more
Upon his cross ; even as behind that wall
He, Judas, had been one :—they two once shared
Thought, hope, life's sweetest light
And gentlest summer wind, and would have come
Thereby to share the only shameless death.
His failures then as set-backs overcome
Had counted ; count now as his contribution
To the completeness of his soul's divorce
From Jesus, from his sometime friend and lord.

Ah ! how could he unmanacle his heart,
Poor dupe and catspaw of malevolent priests ?
He must seek death from priests who judged it normal
One of those nearest Jesus should be bought :
Take them their coin back, and undeceive
Minds that hold all men venal as themselves.

The loud announcement of a second dawn
Surprised him groping in the dust and dirt.
He counted thirty pieces, rose and turned,
Numbed through with grief, to front that radiant city
Whose eastward walls elate welcomed the sun.
Judas recalled how Jesus, while both walked
Apace, some days since, towards those glowing walls,
Likened Jerusalem's beauty to a fig's
Bushy with leaves where not one fruit is hid,—

“ Tree he who planted needs must soon cut down,
Having a last time searched it through mine eyes.
‘ Mock hope no more, Accurséd,’ he will say,
‘ My visitings and tendance disappointed
Condemn thy lavish show. So thou must needs
Be hewn for billets, rooted up and burned,
That once wast watered with my yearning care.’ ”
And some who half-heard or half-understood
He had seen staring round to find what tree
Was cursed : but Jesus noted not their wonder,
And left it helpless, striding on in thought.
Now Judas felt like stern mood rise in him.

WITHIN THE WALLS

“ Look thou to that ! ”

“ Ha ! chief priest and elder

Are not concerned to have slain the innocent !

There your silver lies

Spilled at your feet as it fell scorned at mine,—

When this day broke still lay where it had fallen.

I hoped—as you belike have never hoped,—

He would have shown his power when halted by yours

Unlawfully put forth. But you were doomed

To proffer *that* for more than this Temple's worth.

Though son of man, angels had helped to build him ;

His meekness was, like Samson's blindness, strength

Unapparent : and He who owns

The unopened mines beneath a thousand hills

Will sue you for his blood.”

“ Enough, remove him ! ”

“ Look in these eyes ! God's spirit speaks through me ! ”

The officer draws back daunted, Caiaphas

Grunts angrily once more, “ Out with him, Sirs ! ”

“ Nay,” Annas interposed, “ The man makes claim

To speak to us from God.” Twinkling with malice

His eyes rove to collect their full attention.

“ His master's silence might impose and seem

Some menace, I admit it : yet he's dead.”

His smile expands,—“ These ranters that blaspheme,

Attributing their unclean rage to heaven

And all their ignorance along with it,

Should serve us for our merriment, who find

So little in the monotony of these times.”

Chuckling, the vast priest shooked his robéd fat

O'er which his beard hung like a stained white napkin.

Hearing those words “ His master's silence,” Judas

Was pushed resistless forth over the bridge

And on to Xistus pavement

To walk in step with Jesus, a twin spirit :

Or quiet, unobtrusive as his shadow,

Too meek to break in on his meditation,

Conform to, though it cannot share, his mood.

That purse worn for so long, like curse removed

Lies now upon the floor of the Temple porch.
 His cares are ended, his accounts wound up ;
 He need not think, but, like a well-loved brother
 Returning to his father's house, walk on
 As though assured of welcome.—Half tranced he
 mounts
 That outside stair, crosses the roof, enters
 The guest-room where they supped two nights ago,
 Where now ten mourners lounge with sunken heads ;
 And Thomas nearest, like a lump of lead
 Shaped by portentous grief into a man.
 As though the last two days had never been
 Judas stoops,—lifts that head out of its hands,
 And their eyes meet,—his stare at blubbered eyes—
 Watch loathing leap to life there ; and yet, he muses,
 “ This was the first disciple whom I won
 When I from John had leave to preach—this man
 That spits out at me.” Then he feels forlorn
 Who felt so closely comraded till then.
 “ Didst thou not see who entered with me, Thomas ? ”
 “ Who ? ” “ The Master.” Inconceivably surprised
 The other glared at Judas, who felt compelled
 To try to smile like Jesus,—felt he failed
 Yet still persisted. . . . Were they both one dream ?
 And then he knew the other's strength was real,
 That rose against him, thrust him from the room,
 And threw him headlong into Peter's arms
 (Who was returning with a little food,
 For five loaves fell, and onions rolled about).
 Peter's surprise caught fire from Thomas' eyes,
 Roared suddenly, and butted like a bull,
 Driving him back amongst the other ten
 Who all came crowding out. And Judas
 Was buffeted, cursed, hustled forty seconds ;
 While his dazed wit thought only, “ Jesus
 Would in my place display such gentleness,
 Such dignity, as must compel respect.”
 Shoved hither, thither, reeling, tottering, at last
 He fell against the stair-head, and the eleven
 Recovered from confusion in a group
 Before the guest-room door. The city roofs

Spread downwards thence and southward past the
Temple

Like jumbled stairs of stone squared and piled up
Beneath a quarry all one glare at noon.

Judas then rose, assumed their Master's bearing,
His smile ; and stood there gentle, unresentful,
While blood from under the bandage round his head
Dripped to his ear, ran round it, dripped from thence
Upon his shoulder, shining in the sun

Like rubies. Loud-voiced Peter now began
To curse him from their company,—“Thou dog,
Nor part nor lot with us canst thou have more.
Reviled when met, hated when thought on, poisoned
Be every morsel coming to thy mouth !

May evil men maltreat and swindle thee !
Of all good souls for ever be thou shunned ! ”

Judas sobbed. Peter stared upon a face
Coursed over by tears that shone like diamonds,
Then spotted the flags, as though they had been ink,
As Judas bowed his head and, like small child
That will not wipe its eyes in order to feel
The utter helplessness of woe, just let
Them rain ; shuddered, and like intruding cur
Turned to slink down the stair. Hot shame rekindled

The flames of thought to lash his jaded soul
With a fresh terror,—“I must be mad ? To mime
The Master even to those who knew him best !

I scorned Alphæus's raw lad for taking
Accent and tone from Jesus—he so doted
For days we never heard his proper voice !

Thus, fallen on broken ground, the shadow squirms
At foot of an upright form ! My friend he was,
And now I am his ape ! Fool, fool ! to dream

The means that needed the whole advantages
Of Jesus to support their magic could
Succeed in my denuded strait ! They failed

Even him—had failed him on the cross !
Some devil entered me, has used my brain ! ”

Judas wound lonely lanes through, hugging walls
With narrow bands of shadow at their bases,

Afraid to meet men's eyes, afraid to know
 Some face, yet more in terror to be known.
 Like wounded dog he found peace on a muck heap ;
 The dainty Jew, so careful of defilement,
 Was glad to rest his weary bones on garbage
 Heaped in a small back court between blind walls ;
 To close his eyes mid that hot stench, and seek
 Forgetfulness or sleep within his skull.
 And there he found what most he had deemed lost,—
 Remembrance of the thoughts he gave those Greeks
 Pacing beside Bethesda in the moonlight ;
 The very words he could but half recall
 The morning after, when he longed to arrest
 That old and fierce Essene with their charm.
 Those troops of quick glad words came now and were
 Accompanied, illuminate, by visions
 Of kindly homesteads in well-watered vales,
 Where the fair child whose beauty captivates
 Grows a clear-thoughted lad to shame warped man,
 As leafy sliver fanning might flout a staff
 Cut for and worn by use.

Judas hears his own voice ;
 Relieved from failure in the familiar group
 By hoped success with those who a first time hear it.
 " There is a child of God lives in you, Sirs,
 As little heeded as his Father abroad
 Whose sun shines on good men and bad alike,
 Who even pities a dying sparrow's pain.
 This Son of the Father in each home of thought
 By prouder faculties, his elder brothers,
 Is mocked, like Joseph in old Jacob's tent :
 Yet them he fain would help ; but they deride :—
 ' How should this dreamer aid when Forethought fails ?
 Can he see deeper in the minds of men
 Than shrewdest Cunning ?—Calculate and time
 Like old Experience ?—Has he patience and skill
 Like well-trained Hand ? He with his smile,
 His cooing voice, and vague unvaluing glance,
 He is ridiculous ! nay, doth offend ;
 For his conceit has set us all at naught,

And underrates our Father's wealth and power
Spread far in herds upon these grassy hills,
Imagining we shall have need of him.
What, bow to him? What, beg a boon? The upstart!
Down with him to the pit! Let him not speak!
Shall smooth-chinned impudence argue with grown
men?'

So every headful brow beats gentleness;
And as his brethren sold the tender Joseph
So mean cares, ill-grown attitudes of mind
Sell into slavery each soul's dear best.

Or call to mind how Israel first chose king.
Hark what a din they make! Saul looks so big!
Yet he was hidden in the stuff just now.
Taller by head and shoulder takes the eye
Though a weak soul lurk there. "He shall be king!"
The choice was God's, though each man thought it his
And off-hand dared decide the nation's fate.
Next time God searches through each private tent
Not choosing as men choose to shame their pride
He sifts more finely, not tempted by mere size.
Man after man parades his faculties,—
Like that old Jesse, told one of his sons
Is chosen by God to be anointed king,
Whose fond heart cries, proud of his elder born,
'Look on these stalwarts; empty now your horn!
They are so goodly, only God could pick
One out by a pin's value, mole's defect.'
Yet Samuel demurred. 'Tis ever thus:
Here is a man trusts fleet tough-sinewed legs;
Another smiling puts his quick wit forward;
A third wins crowds of friends with that soft manner;
A fourth can argue, a fifth plan and build.
But each Day sighs 'Have you no other gift?
My frustrate opportunity can crown
No one of these.' So reluctant Samuel shook
An hoary poll: 'Are these men *all* your sons?
They are fine fellows, but God anoints them not.'
'Why yes,' at length, scratching his perplexed head,
Jesse admits 'There is a slip, a boy

Up in the field, born of a mother nigh
 Too old to bear. What he may yield God knows.
 ' Yet fetch him hither ! ' ' Run for David ! Go !
 Bawl for him from the top of yonder hill ! '—
 ' David, ahoy ! Hither, boy ! Come, dreamy head,
 Look more alive ! ' ' There ! He blushes like a girl ! '
 ' And he may blush, for God anointeth him.'
 ' What is he good for ? ' cry his outraged brethren
 ' Naught but to sing, dream or mind sheep ! Bethink
 How he was drowsy when the lion came,
 And yet again that time a bear broke in.'
 ' Be not too hard on him ; remember, sons,
 That, though so little, he went after both
 And brought the ravened lamb back to the flock.'
 Ere long this David had Goliath down ;
 He proved our greatest king, and wrote our psalms.
 Sirs, even so the truest courage lies
 In the most tender part of man's whole mind.

Now note, my Master, when he was a child,
 Though tempted so to scorn and slight his best,
 Let it grow bravely like a watered flower
 That offers naught but beauty for your care :
 And when its bloom was perfect, lo, a voice
 From Heaven told us he had become God's Son,—
 The solely wholly begotten of his Spirit
 That works against the stream of cross-events
 And will establish kindness and peace,
 His kingdom, in the room of all bad kings ;
 For his of right the throne in each man's breast.
 And those who yield him first their usurped power
 Shall feel that spirit first, which like a wind
 Invisible, unseizable, bows worldly thought
 As herb and shrub are bowed by summer breeze :
 But can break all that stubbornly refuse
 Until he like a tempest visit them.

My Master's wisdom shows the way this spirit
 Unravels dangerous knots in simple lives.
 His spoken pictures touch the heart to tears ;
 For bodied men think best when watching others

Act in a story as themselves might really.

Yea, like a vesture is this solid earth,
And like a little shirt the flesh of man :
In both there is a spirit habited,
And we come nearest both when eyelids shut
Their shapes and colours from our dazzled minds,
Which feel then what was seen. Thus Rabbi Jesus
Reveals the Son within, till then unnoted,
As is God's goodness that sustains the world ;
For the true Son of God is son of man.
Yea, Sirs, it is within you ye must grope
For that which Jesus adds unto our souls :
His great gift to us is our own indeed.
He holds the lamp and points the way, but each
Must close his eyes to find. He opes the gate,
Then all his thoughts troop in, as to a fold
At night the sheep. Dark, cold, and sullied places,
Unvisited for weeks, the stone-walled folds that stand
Among these hills. A swaying lanthorn nears,
Borne by a shepherd after whom the sheep
Shuffling and bleating crowd. So Jesus brings
To callous souls live, warm and gentle thoughts."

The while his eloquence, an inward flood,
Lifts every trampled blade in his soul's field,
Judas beholds the babe, the soft-limbed life
That acts each joyous thought, entranced to feel
His goodness blossom beauty, and attract
Ever more glances, smiles and cheery nods.

"Come watch this little lad, bright through your tears,
In coat of many hues at work, at play,
Avoiding all self-willed and violent seizures
That the rough brothers in most children cause
When they presume !"

Vision displaces vision
While words flow on like music from glad runnels
And thought reslakes the drougthy dusty soul :—
Which now watches a ship sail on a lake,

Daring and dainty, when down the black squall swoops,
And all is danger, confusion, and despair.
He feels the waves thud on the timber shell,
Tastes the salt spray, while bulging swartness lunges
Over torn billows, and shrieking wind whips up
And flings about packets of swirling foam,
Till one who slept till then is roused, or one
Left far behind comes walking over waves,—
The banished Son of God,—the child in man's
Capacious breast, that trim and buoyant bark,
Whose crew disdains to rouse the cabin boy :
They trust their oak beams, till they see his freshness
Pace calm athwart the tumult that appals them.

And ever, before and after each clear image,
Appears his Master's thought-delighted mien,
That asks for understanding, and greets it always
As though it were the first he ever met.
But now the huge priest Annas blots him out.
He surely early smothered his little lad,
Who must lie buried like a baby Pharaoh
Beneath that pyramid, that pompous presence.
The dreamer scans the man and his soul's plight
So clearly that he now addresses both :—
“ Thou Boast profane, though thou hast long forgot him,
A temper God-anointed for thy king
Once lodged in thee, starved there, was driven out :
God's patience leased thy life next to proud gifts
As monarch might a vineyard to rich men ;
And when the dues agreed on yet came not
He sent his servants (sent his saints to thee)
Who beat them, drove them empty-handed off :
Last, thy discarded goodness waits without ;
Thou sawest him in those eyes, didst hear his voice
The while thy wonder waited to hear words
From silent Jesus. He was done to death.
Now when the heir has knocked at a heart in vain,
Destruction follows, and it repents too late.”
The fat man chuckles, winces no whit to hear,
Feeling his prosperous old age draw out
Magnificent before the eyes of men.

And Judas, in his dream abashed, reflects
The tares and wheat must grow together,—yea,
Yet Jesus, the full ear, has been torn up,
And this conspicuous over-fattened weed
Stinks in the very seat that was his due.
—Which hard thought broke his sleep like a smart
blow.

He woke to sob :—

“ O pitiful Jesus, thou indeed wast mad ;
And, tainted with sheer folly caught from thee,
I have rebelled against my nation’s God
Whose thought moves higher above the minds of men
Than white clouds sail at noon, stars glide by night.
The God of Israel is no kindly Father
But a great power mighty and tremendous
Who heeds not what we do ; disdains our virtue,
Because he has appointed certain means,—
Long prayers and ceremoniously burnt fat,
Not for a reason,—or because he chose
Rather to be adored than counted on.”

Judas, prostrate till now, sat stiffly up,
Sharing no longer one mind with his Master
But repossessed by aches and faint for food.
Long he sat lost, too weak to rise, too weary
Even to recouch his throbbing head, and smiled
At idly-presented polished tables laid as
For fabulous feast, enislanded with salvers :
Some crystal cups crowd brimmed with
Drink for queen’s sipping,
Some gold plates a-heap with
Princes’ gay-tinted food.
He gazes, enhumes their spiced fragrance deeply
In whiffs that lift the heart ; then reek from filth
Intermits his appetite’s delirium.
He swoons to hell, the hot stench where he sits
Fills that dark pit ; whence the fair feast retrieves him.
And yet, despite the seduction of its luring,
His late dream haunted him, like a safe place
Which he most inadvisedly had left.
Thus in a battle where stones and arrows rain

The soldier who has crawled from under corpses
Wishes himself once more beneath dead comrades.

Among those dear thoughts only had he been
Absorbed in bliss. If hearing Jesus did,
No other music rivalled his own tongue's flow
That made them audible. Since he could be
Lapped in a sunny hour as in a trance,
Naught else made him a child. To sleep, to dream
He longed : and yet once more to lie back seemed
So perilous a movement, he rather turned
To woo his dream's thin waking ghost from tired
Memory. Soft on tears his hot lids closed.
He could not now placate the world or God,
So toiled on foot after those thoughts that flew ;
Himself pursued and often overtaken
By vision of spluttering roast or dazzling jelly
Which, soon refluent like a flat-shore wave,
Suddenly dumps him down in that foul sty
His body sits in ; ere long to recollect,
And to set out anew for his soul's goal ;—
Yet plods on but as traveller who wades
Knee-deep through stubborn shrubs up an hillside.
And pain is with him like a clinging child
That will be dragged along, or even carried ;
The home they seek far off.

Yet still he thinks—

Possesses his own mind, but needs a hearer
From whose eyes young life leaps and laps at thought :
Excitement would saddle eloquence then, to bear him
Like a swift steed from this atrocious desert
Into that land of deep entrancéd fancy :—
Which notion at once deludes him like mirage :
He rises and prowls forth to a streaming street,
To lie in wait, like leopard near a flock,
For that intelligent yet lambl-like face
With youth and kindness to nerve him to address it:
In shadowed corner fever-shaken he leans,
Sick as some woman hiding near a casement
Waiting to hear a step stop on the road,

And that soft whistle tell her all is clear
Before she show her face to eyes below ;—
Waiting far longer than ever before she waited.
He comes indeed, he comes in all his beauty,
A finished temple fit to receive the holiest,
Like John, yet with no hatred in his heart.
What strength the Master had received from John,
Who drank his mood more readily than his words,
And, truer than mirror, showed him his own eyes
With that kind look in them that greeted others !
He must come soon ; how many country lads
With a refined preparedness for God
The feast brought to Jerusalem from hamlets
Where never a lust for wealth, a rage for power,
An itch to impose by learning or strict life,
Had hardened any heart. Such youths are fed
On lovely psalms and prophecies divine,
And savour Jesus' thought with all its perfume.
As children stoop their faces over roses
Till, as they breathe the scent, those glowing hues
Are thrown up on the smoothness of their foreheads,
So, while his study bows him over a scroll,
A young man's brow takes light from lovelier worlds.

He must be coming ; yet face after face
Went by that had no kinship with that longed for.
He need not be so perfect as John was,
If only he be young, honest, and quick
To entertain the best. But sullen or hard,
Or self-conceited, frivolous, sensual, dull,
The young men whom he dared not stop went by.
Thomas had been no eagle when first met,
Only an eager eye in a blunt face,—
Not such a rarity ! A Thomas will do.
Ah ! here come five or six who laugh together.
A smile reveals the best in common features ;
Yes, he whose hand rests on that tall lad's shoulder
Owns a reserve of innocence at least ;
His smile is frank. And forward Judas darts,
And pulls one by the sleeve who looks at him
With sudden horror, as who should see a fiend.

Dizzy to have moved fast, striving to force
 His tongue "A word, young Rabbi!" stumbles faint
 From Judas' dry and well-nigh soundless mouth;
 Then, to retrieve lost hope, he lifts his head
 With that contained smile Jesus used with strangers;—
 Only the muscle in each cheek will jog.
 The youngster shakes him off. "What unclean cur
 Is this?" the tall lad cries.—"I know him not!"—
 "Someone has very properly broke his head"
 Another interjects. "What would you with me?"
 Enquires the boy, whose face has now become
 Hard, even insolent, despite his youth.
 "Nothing. Forgive!" the Iscariot muttered dazed.
 "I would serve him right to crack his skull again"
 The tall lad scoffed. They all passed forward, staring
 Half-angry, half-amused, across their shoulders,
 While he limped back to ambush.
 "Mad, mad!" he groaned to himself, "I've done just
 that
 I did before; I aped Jesus, though unwashed
 For these two days, with bandaged head, clothes rent;
 Repulsive as a leper, dreamed I might
 Impose as did his seemly dignity!
 My reason flounders when I think for long."

Afraid of thought, of purpose, passion, will,
 As of a group of devils leagued within him,
 Listless he drifts from lane to street, content
 To note that very misery disguises,
 Making his sad plight self-explanatory,—
 Accepted for some beggar's stock-in-trade
 Who men are pleased is not importunate.
 He limps out on to Xistus terrace, whence
 The Temple bridges span the Tyropœan
 That broadens southward, filled with lowing dairies
 Halts in the midst of its broad pavement, scans
 Its western side for Seth's shop. There, lo, there!
 Boarded and sealed, with parchment tag attached
 Which draws him close: how has he failed to note it
 Though often passing? Now he lifts and reads:
 "This property pending a judgment is

Protected by the court from all infraction.”
Can Seth be dead ? His will disputed ? Or
Has *he* gone mad ? No ; industrious and sane,
Judas could not conceive that man’s mind lost. . . .
Ah ! would he have ever doubted of his own ?
Newly affrighted, he hurries off down-hill
For lack of strength and energy to climb ;
In dread that, should he rest his aches, mad thought
Would egg him on to re-enact his shame
And mime a bearing loved more than his own.

Yet soon, day-dreaming,—
His past and future vagrancies are merged
Into one view, framed with obscurity ;—
Therein his figure like to some one else,
As from high hill-top seen, or anchored cloud,
A tiny manikin
Half an inch tall, yet recognizable
By yellow smock, brown cloak, his mother’s weaving,—
Part of her pride in him, yet walks the land
(As he has mainly since he left his home,
As soon may well have grown an ingrained habit)
Meets many men ; here talks excitedly,
There slinks away as though he had no tongue
And turns at length, as late from Seth’s closed shop,
From every door at which he used to knock ;
For courage, leaking, hails no man for master
Like those who held youth spell-bound : soon e’en friends
Are shunned. He drives on, with craned crag-nosed face,
Bronzed skin, and thatch quite lustreless, like wool
On black sheep’s back scorched to a rusty brown ;—
Down to green Jericho, through Jordan’s ford,
Up Gilead, down once more to wander round
The laughing lake. Always more mute, more foreign,
More sinister, more foul, he watches men,
Who hook brown fingers into gaping gills
To handle shining-bellied fish as though
It were as common food as loaves or gherkins ;
But dares not speak to them, though once he was
The fellow of such honest hearty lads :
So limps in painful aimlessness for years

Through scenes where he had plotted the world's change.

Thus now he hobbles out by the Dung Gate
Into foul smoke borne down by north-east air
From off huge middens shot out 'neath the Temple,
Wherein the priestly butcher, baker, joiner,
Goldsmith, mason, fuller and weaver ply
Their crafts, to replenish the altar or replace
Worn curtain and utensil, or yet perfect
The fabric huge with patiently choice work.
Beneath its platform all their shops find room,
Or round the Gentiles' court, and feed those heaps
That smoulder night and day at that dream's foot
Which rises like a cliff to front the south.
Jesus had likened it unto man's body,
Which also is a temple meant for God,
Fair to behold and very intricate :
Puts forth foul waste with shame and must be cleansed ;
While in the Holy of Holies creative power
Works on, although the porches soil and age ;—
At length shall leave a caved-in ruin for
House, neither grown nor built, with crystal walls,
Wherein both seen and seeing it shall shine.
So too, he loved to add, in this vast world
God's unseen kingdom ripens to appear,
And even now tastes good where true men meet.
“ But he who was to gather in the fruits
From all Judea and all Galilee,
And by their means from that vast world outside,
Himself was seized, defiled, broken and crushed
To yield this vinegar wherewith my grief
Is sopped and sour, as with his hopes was drunk
The life I led till now.” And peering up
At the vast building throned upon its hill,
Judas believed, as never before he dared ;
That not a stone would rest there on another :
But the Uplifted sprawl like carrion corpse
Where wise men give it a wide windward berth.
On and still on he plods, defeating pain,
Hobbling o'er cobbles kept filthy by the dung
Of passing cattle or carted dripping out

From shed, stable and yard, to dry, bake hard,
Crumble to dust, then rise at the least puff
And stifle those who pass. Roadway and walls
Called out to those who cleanse them " Recommence ! "
While they grew hopeless and perfunctory.
Poisoned hereat and with malodorous smoke
Judas, as those who breathe fumes to see visions,
Saw his sprawled carcass where deserted track
Wound over and under the steep Dead Sea crags ;
Its skull devoid of all that fights his pain
By showing him clean spacious solitudes
Peaceful to die in, that with imperious lure
Draw on its growing stiffness step by step.
So be-nightmared, the pertinacious spirit
Seeks for one room through a fantastic palace,—
Still feels it near yet never haps thereon,
Though passing endless doors ; thus eludes him
The vivid vision of a certain spot
That he will recognize, know how to reach,
Where he must lie for days, while jackals tear
And vultures leave their feast whenever less
Lethargic creature come to claim a share ;
Or, if some pious man should chance to pass,
All would be buried hastily on waste ground
By those who long to purify themselves,
Then, freed from their religious task, to push
Their worldly interests or gain their homes.
Yes, though a Jew, his impotent despair
Chuckles insanely over the loathsome corpse
That he expects, nay, well-nigh hopes to be,—
So greatly contradicted is his soul.

The north-east corner of Siloam's pool,
Still warmly sunned, allures him through the smoke
With nearer rest ; the silent shining water
Is walled on three sides, steps from the near end
Descending under its brightness out of sight ;
While on the west a pillared portico
Throws shade across it, and harbours a stone bench
That skirts its further wall, from whence old men
Gaze through the columns at the sun-soaked scene.

Children wade there, tall girls there rinse pitchers,
And after linger in groups to chat, or lounge
Over the eastern parapet, as though
Their eyes like divers might find jewels dropped
By old-time beauties ; for men hold that here
Bathsheba dipped, by David watched from far,
Ere temple and palace crowned the neighbour hills.
Among the grey-beards Judas sat him down.
Eased a first time of that control which God
And law exacted from his nation ; he,
Exempt from hope and hankering by despair,
Could watch the brown-legged wading children play,—
Delight in lacing curves that from their thighs
Swept outward o'er the pool ; or mildly note,
Without a shade of censure or desire,
The irrepressible life in girls, revealed
By glances at young men, or intent smiles
To their own eyes deep seen through quiet water.

Oh ! those green gardens flanking Olivet,
And the white village cleaving them across !
Sight bathes and his head swims afloat in peace.
While, as from under placid summer sea
The phantom of a city drowned beneath
May rise before some poet's eyes, who rocks
His lonely bliss enisled on a small boat,—
So for entranced and vaguely smiling Judas
The Lake of Galilee usurped that pool,
And superseded vineyarded Siloam
With other towns and groves and morning sun ;
While quite near, Jesus, shadowed by a sail,
Clear cut against the bland expanse beyond,
Is lifted slowly or dips, as Peter's boat
Heaves with the lake's calm pulse ; and all is tuned
To the conscious presence of deep holy thought.
Yet he hears never a word, nor strives to hear :
Freed from ambition's hold, he can enjoy
The vision and the mood without a thought.

Then suddenly some young man rudely laughs ;—
A girl has dropped her comb into the pool,

And little boys are struggling in wet shirts
Who shall first reach it ; but it lies too deep.
The rivals must consent to help each other,
And hold the tallest by one hand, while he
Submerged with held-in breath achieves their end.
Then with proud pleasure the dripping glowing group
Restores the silver gaud, while even old men
Stir and approve. Thought dawns, as Judas' mind
Shares in that genial flicker with which all kindle :
Once more he feels words mount,
And his lips yield, as to inveterate habit.
“ My masters,”—but the old men start, he ceases,—
Conscious they hear a loathly beggar speak.

The portico's shade anon has crossed the pool,
Climbs the parapet east and threatens the hill ;
Daunting his heart as though it chased the chief,
The final opportunity from his life.
As in a storm the man washed overboard
Seizes the rope flung out, yet feels it slip ;
With frantic effort brings his other hand
Above that which lets go : or as one dreaming
Half-waked, succeeds in holding his loved dream
By self-willed self-abandon ; so Judas held
Emotions ebbing, as sunlight from that scene,
And drew his desperate mind back to that mood,
Securing it with words remembered, nay,
Almost reheard. “ Who lets self drop shall find Me :
For I have put self off, as Peter here
Lays by his shirt to haul his dripping nets ;
Or as king doffs the heavy jewelled crown
To counsel his true friend. So all who help
Forget their dignity, quit their own tasks,—
As fisher, stepping to his fellow's boat
From out his own, lends hand and thinks it naught.”
Yea, thus a moment since each brown-limbed boy
Laid by his hope to grab that silver comb
And helped his friend who had the longer arm.

Still Judas felt he had but shaky hold
Upon the implications of this thought,—

"Who lets self go shall find my Father and Me."
 God's arm is longest ; yea. Men should help God,
 For only He has power to reach their goal :
 Yet each is busy for himself alone.
 There was a day when they had been becalmed
 Out on the lake, as it seemed now, in heaven,—
 So full and shining had those hours been.
 Jesus repeated in an hundred forms
 This thought that day, with silences that told
 As richly as the happiest parable.—
 How what men lack is in God's gift alone,—
 A mood to lift them far above themselves :
 And He asks help of each unhandy man.
 Not that He cannot do great works alone,
 But that He would have every man to share :
 And those alone can fully feel success
 Who give whole-hearted help. Yea, that is clear.
 If God desire to knit all hearts to His
 Then everyone who can contribute, must
 Be ready with his life, or may be death,
 If ever he by dying can lend aid.
 But when he dies, yet does not help a jot . . . ?
 And Judas saw those crosses on the knoll
 As he had seen them when the sand-storm cleared,
 Or as one on a mountain bathed in light
 Through parting cloud descries in black abyss
 Rain, lightning, wind, at havoc far beneath
 Bright domes that heave like waves about his feet.
 What then, could hand close such a rift, were done,
 That desperate passion now for Judas did,
 Shutting those menaceful crosses out of thought.
 To save life, man leaps in the dark, prefers
 Blank ignorance to clear despair, and shuts
 Both eyes on death to dream an instant's life.
 Even so much joy is better than so much pain,—
 Life fed on dream than life that feeds mere death.
 When our best thoughts prove false before we die,
 To play on with them, as broken gambler toys
 With useless dice, having naught else to lose,
 May raise at least the ghost of thralling hours.
 So Judas felt his hold upon this train

Of notions linking as by miracle
Might be his reason's last free turn about
The field it loved. Even as might a lad,
When summoned soon to leave his home for war,
Run through each lane ; and lean on every gate ;
And with a pagan heart might all but kiss
The wood and stone of door and walls that held
All that had taught him prize kind life so high ;—
Thus Judas hugged those dear, dear thoughts, and cried
“ Each young life is a bevy of grown girls ! ”
With sudden startling anguish in his voice
To hearers who judged him stricken mad for sin :
And then was silent, for he felt a need
To course with thought ahead and prove his power
To treat an intricate theme as it demanded :
So to himself rehearsed thus : “ Each young life,
Like a bunch of maidens of an age,
Waits by the roadside till the bridegroom come.
That is, it longs to help, not as a child
By fits and starts, but with devoted life.
Say the bride's father is a wealthy man,
Whose feast wears out their patience and the night ;
Then like such girls, our clustered faculties
Grow weary waiting and oft fall asleep :—
For we ripe very slowly from the child.
Grant one such group wise-hearted, one half-mad,
That lets wild joy in noise and turbulence
Carry a senseless riot through its teens,
Seeming the more alive ; yet those live best
Who often draw apart in studious muse,
Though their days may flash less. Now when the cry
Comes down the road, the wild have empty lamps,
Their joy has burnt out while their reason slept.
The other group relights each lamp, still full
Because they felt a senseless joy was waste.
These sing the bride unto her dear groom's house :—
He is man's strength to lend God steady help,
And carries home his spouse, the fair occasion
To alway do that thing which most needs doing.”

Here Judas broke from thought and spoke aloud :

Conscious some six old men would hear, but knowing
They would resent such wisdom from a beggar,
He feigned the very ecstasy he dreaded
And spoke as tranced, not glancing left or right,
Beginning thus. "Each young soul is a knot
Of well-grown girls; sight, hearing, smell, taste, touch
Are lamps held in their hands; and by the road
They wait the bridegroom's coming." Then he heard
One of the old men rise and walk away.
Still he persisted, though his words would stray
And wander round the thought; a second, then
A third old man makes off; a fourth, a fifth,—
With the last Judas rises and keeps pace
That he at least may hear the story out,
With every inference deducible
By an excited fancy. Ere he ceased
He had grown conscious that from time to time,—
Like bats before they leave the twilight eaves,—
Beneath that old bowed head protests muttered
As though they soon would wake and fly in anger:
So stooped that he might hear. "What ails you still
To follow me with such a deal of talk?
I am stone deaf." Then, like those girls shut out,
Who beat upon the door and felt hope die
Within their panting hearts, Judas sank down
Beside the uphill road and sobbed "Too late!"
Like those five virgins who had been to buy
Fresh oil, his quite exhausted soul must hear
"I know you not; ye cannot enter now:"
While long the shuttered House of Life resounded
To the soft blows of bruised and impotent hands.

BEYOND THE WALLS

As an unowned and famished dog dies slowly
Out in the road, so helpless Judas lay
Quite self-deserted : passers-by said " drunk "
To silence fear lest he deserved their help.
Soon darkness saved late hurriers bound for Ophel
E'en so much thought : but kindly slumber stooped
And to a rock-hewn tomb transported him.

On one of eight shelves there he soon felt vexed,
Though safe, to lie an heap, arms under head,
Knees cranked. No one had laid him out, and yet
Seven corpses formal and embalmed filled other
Niches around that narrow ordered peace ;
Which, though dark, stood as complete within his mind
As light and power to lift up head and eyelid
Could have revealed. Why had there been no sheet
To wind him in ? Tormented to be sole
Uncared-for out of eight,—as oft in life
One out of twelve, he had shared his Master's thought
And been both proud and tortured to be sole,—
Death's impotence oppressed him now, as then
An unhelped need to express what all ignored—
What yet he felt more real than aught beside—
What surely Jesus must have fully meant.
But, lo !

Across the narrow tunnel some one moves.
The body in that niche facing his own
Has stirred, and now in ache-full long suspense
Works cautiously toward the ledge's brink :
First with one foot probes down, then stands on both,
And, feeling forward, stooped beneath the roof,
Trailing an heavy shroud with furtive rustle,
Rubs warily toward the slab-closed end,—
Pushes with hands that are but skeletons
The wheel of stone : this edgewise to the left
Churns, and repeatedly jerks, not being quite round.
Then, having cleared the entrance, rocks a little
With dying grumbles against the outside wall.

Moonlight has entered and fallen upon his face.

He tries to open a lid : at length he stares
 Up through a fig-tree's leaves, which wave and let
 Blinding shafts from beyond them strike at him ;
 His eyes must close once more. Yes, he has dreamed,
 And still lies on the road, not in a tomb.
 Some dog is wandering near : he dares not shift
 Or it will bark, and the whole horde will come
 Down from the village. Soon a wider shade
 Screens his face over as the moon climbs higher.
 Again he sleeps ; again is in that tomb ;
 Knows Jesus has been laid in an end niche.
 Rises himself now, kneels now
 Beside that upper shelf ;
 Feels now across, along it,—
 Nothing but folded bands !
 Nothing but dust on stone !
 Yet still is sure that Jesus has been there.
 Alarmed, his mind struggles with numbing sleep.
 Jesus ? Who is Jesus ?
 A thing wound up in cerements was Jesus.
 But whence came he ? And whither has he gone ?
 " Behold the sole man wholly son to God ! "—
 Vast wonder widened John the Baptist's gaze
 While his long elf-locks shook,—“ I heard those words
 Even as I dipped him and the heavens blazed.”

Judas remembers questioning many of this :
 The Baptist and baptized had both been awed
 By something that occurred two days before
 At noon ; but what, they never fully told him.
 Though some then present knew it not, yet he
 Found some to allege that a dove had been seen to
 Descend that never reascended—never
 Quit Jesus ! How, then ? Had it merged with him ?
 For which cause he rejected this, and doubted
 Report of words which varied even more
 Than the report of who had heard.—The Baptist ?
 Jesus himself ? Or all who clustered round ?
 Yet lo ! His eyes feel now that light draw near
 Which then had shone on them. Now, even now,
 His own unvisited eyes, incredulous heart,

And never satiate brain
Shall know how blue noon hides
More than the stars and brighter than the sun !
He starts awake ! A smoky lanthorn swings
Close to his face. The foot of him who holds it
Prods at his back.

They stared at one another.
The man, whose face was heavy as wet wool,
Said " What's the matter ? " Judas answered
" Nothing ! "

The other shrugged his shoulders, and moved off
With loud but unexpressive clog-shod feet.
Judas sat up to watch his swaying lanthorn
Carry its orange eye into the moonlight,
That softened the stars and citted hills with sheen,
Down and across the bridge ; then turning left
Make for Ge Hinnom's vale, where refuse burned
Beneath the aqueduct, and on the silver smoke
The fires impinged bright red : and thence his gaze
Strayed northward over city and Temple, varied
More than a dream, so stable, so complete.
Yet he thought " Fool, to let the fellow go
And never ask a bite ! " and thereon basins
Assaulted his mind ; such had he never seen ;
They over-brimmed with sauces on which rocked
Bright-coloured gobbets of he knew not what,—
But so inviting both to tooth and tongue,
Or smooth to swallow, that his vitals crawled :
And suddenly he must lean and vomit bile,
Retching with cruel unrelieved throes
Until he thought his ghost would part from him.
A moist warmth quickly spread his person over ;
Drops ran upon his brow and his ears sang.
Soon an anxiety to quit that smell
Grew so extreme that he determined to rise,
However dire an anguish motion caused.
Then, as a wind enters a drowsy house
Silent with heat, on summer afternoon
And this door bangs, then that, then several doors,
While the trees shudder and stoop themselves outside,

Judas heard sounds at diverse distances :—
 Trundled boulder or sudden shock of stone
 That brought to mind his childhood in the quarries.
 What could they mean here at the city's foot ?
 With frantic effort he got on his legs,
 Staggered about, and held a riven head,
 While round him the whole landscape turned as when
 A fishing boat takes to the other tack
 And her long boom swings dangerously across
 The ducked heads of her crew. At length he grasped
 The firm wall on the road's north side, and held on
 Till the horizon, as a spun wheel slowing,
 Came to a stand. Then after awhile his thought
 Anchored anew on those surprising sounds.
 Beyond the Kedron, under the east face
 Of the long Temple platform,—mid black clumps
 Of box and cypress, whited sepulchres
 Stand out : each low façade had now an eye.
 Have the tombs opened ? Does he dream or wake ?
 Can God's spirit have returned into dead saints ?
 Walk they the gardens ? Whither ? What to do ?
 As when round sycamore bole dead leaves lie thick
 A gentle gust may suddenly raise a number
 And set them turning, so now rise and twirl
 Hopes he had judged to have cheated him most vilely.
 Within this wall, screened by those tall near shrubs,
 Are other tombs agape ? Has that sealed stone
 North-west across the city rolled aside ?—
 And, to the horror of its lock-jawed guard ;
 Jesus come forth Messiah ?

Such wild hopes kill ;

And Judas felt his last of strength ebb out,
 And like an old rug hung limp on the wall.
 But though his sinews melted, his mind cleared
 To feel as Ezekiel felt and every Jew,—
 As proved past hope—as ever present anguish,—
 How brittle bones are scattered, powdered, lost.
 Many the saints, alas ! who were not laid
 In cool rock-cellar, builded chamber, or grave,
 But lie dispersed, indistinguishable from loam.
 How should these come together ? Will the sea

Disgorge dissolvéd folk ? From desert sand,
 From dust of road and rubble of ruined town
 Can particles be sifted till bones reform ?
 And men ?
 From crumbling carcase and from sunburnt dung
 Will those devoured of lions be retrieved ?
 Yet, though Ezekiel saw bones come together,
 Some, watching corpses, have seen phantoms rise ;—
 The solid releasing a faint soft filmy shape
 That life fused with it, making one of two
 As lovers yearn yet never can achieve.
 But *this* death freed from the stale too-long-hugged,
 This, thin, thin and sere, outlived its other,
 And as those ghosts of leaves that are but lace,
 Well-nigh like spider-web, by summer breeze
 Are lifted from dried stream bed up to mock
 Trees fully clothed that can cast solid shade ;
 So large limp wraiths irreducibly man-shaped,
 In some lights visible, in most lights not,
 Might drift or lie amassed in deep ravines
 That channel the Dead Sea's adamantine walls :¹
 Or, when the saint has been embalmed and tombed,
 His ghostly double might share the same ledge
 Waiting God's will to breathe through it again.
 He oft had thought that if God's spirit returned
 After the dissolution of man's flesh,
 More probably it would requicken such
 Unknown and tenuous stuff, like stagnant air
 Not to be breathed, sheer weight on mouth and chest
 In rugged gullies round the Dead Sea shores.
 His mind transports him thither to stand, as oft
 A lad, above them, sun-smit after rain,
 When vapour from their storm-bathed naked rock
 Would rush back into air, and form new clouds ;
 So in this moonlight now, charmed back to life
 Those viewless indivisible forms stream up
 Condensing each to apparition ; they close
 In gleaming phalanxes addressed to storm
 This rebel city that has cast her king.
 Himself had lately dreamed some such shaped rose,
 Dragging a heavy shroud, and rolled a stone :—

Clear warning to him of the thing now happened !
His head lifts and his gaze devours the valley :
Yes, every visible tomb is eyed with dark !
Though his sight swimming make them seem to roll.
Soon, pain spell-bound by energy to enquire,
Not seeking for the gate, he mounts the wall.
Such gardens for the dead were each a close
Against stray dogs : no Jew would ever leave
Their gates unlatched. But eagerness deludes :
Once up, he sways and toppling forward falls
To lie until a throbbing head permit
To draw hurt limbs from under him to ease.

Some time must have elapsed before he stood
To part the shrubs, as moonlight were a lake
Into which he would wade, then felt its beauty
Buoy him like tranquil waves. Almost a dream,
His wakefulness has intervals ; lately there
Now here ;—but how was the space traversed ? How ?
At times most keen to meet the risen dead !
Anon soaking white radiance aimlessly
As though he were the phantom of himself,
Shaped in new painless flesh, sweet for new hope,
And all old thoughts completely out of mind !
For lo ! airs passed that drew forth silver sound
According near with distant rustling bushes
To hold him spell-bound till each phrase had ended.

At length he stands beside an open tomb,
Yet fears to stoop and peer within it ; not
That he dreads aught that there might meet his gaze,
But that remembrance of his recent pain
Holds up his head.

To a tomb farther on
His gaze is lured off : for a young man now
Slowly comes from it, stepping as entranced
To feel his limbs obey, his feet support.
Like perfect probity, his nakedness
Inspires awe, and the Jew feels no shame
To gaze thereon, as on the Temple itself

First sighted from the top of Olivet
A pilgrim with rapt eyes. As patently holy
As he is circumcised, the phantom turns,
Glances towards Judas, notes him not, but smiles
To some one else. Yes! Stooping from the door
Near to which Judas stands, an old man answers
That smile and, freed from the low lintel, straightens :
He too wears naught but long white hair and beard.
They draw together pleased ; for those young eyes
Discern no stricture in those old, and these
Are not chagrined to find their judgment rated
As far too foreign to the morrow's needs
To impose at all ; but each in the other's gaze
Greets, tip-toe or more sedate, a wonder tuned
To a deep music that at last begins
And hitherto was waited. They move away
Conversing as lovers will, with glance and smile
And gently touching hands ;—not needing words
To welcome the joy each feels at meeting trust.
And though the shrubs soon hid them from his view,
With parted lips Judas scarce breathing stood,
As though his body feared to rouse his soul
From some rapt study in which it could not share.

But sound afresh came from the tunnelled rock.
Judas sank to his knees and peered along
The dark, and was no whit surprised to find
One far recess upon the right hand filled
With soft wan light, more violet than the moon's.
Impalpable dust smoked off the long shelf edge ;
And as in darkness it dissolved, that light
Died out, as though its cause had been that dust :
Yet sounds continued thence, nay even increased ;—
Till lo ! a foot felt out into moonlight
That fell within the entrance : gnarled, shrunk, frail
And almost like some bird's, the shin to the knee
Obtruded, followed by a withered thigh.
For the light climbed as there advanced to it
The scaffold and the casing of a womb
That had borne many children long ago,—
Discoloured, wrinkled, and yet as in childhood frank

Not veiled with any hair. Over it hung
Leathery used-up dugs, and last (unbowed
She could not have stood above five span and a half)
A toothless face alive with infant joy.
He could not bear it ; and, as from white heat
Too near his face, must fling himself aside
Along the ground to weep as he'd not wept
For years,—as only the young weep. Had he
Been miles from there, beside his mother's grave,
He had not been more moved.

Then when his passion lulls itself to peace
He hears a young child laughing, and looks up.
Surprise like summer-lightning flashes through him
Beholding grassy slopes not there before.
Over that on which he lies, but higher up,
A boy of two or three runs and then falls,
To laugh until his mother stoop and, strong
And supple in her full bloom, toss him high,
Then on his little bosom browse for joy
With rapidly kissing lips. In him glee shrieks.
He struggles to be freed,—and on his feet
Starts off, falls and the whole scene repeats.
Both bodies undisguised and unadorned
Are with such glad life brimmed, time after time
Judas enjoys the game as much as they.
But lo ! the woman lifts to the moon her face :—
“ She is my Sara ! ” Judas sobs aloud
“ He is my son ! ” Both stand and gaze at him.
The little fellow, finger to lip, exclaims
“ A living stone ! ” and straight dissolves to air,
As candied figure, fashioned by cunning cook,
Might, dipped in heated water. Shrewd fear turns
His gaze, absorbed adoring his fair child,
Lest Sara too have vanished. No, she still,
Though changed, stands near, now draped in one long
gown ;
And drawing close stoops over Judas and speaks.
“ O husband, do I see thee ? Thou not dead ?
Canst thou have prayed for this ? ” “ No, Sara, no :
I never dreamed that such prayer could have answer.

Yet I have suffered more than most who die,
 Though still I live ; and I believe we meet
 That I may suffer yet more from remorse.
 When I deserted thee I turned my back
 Upon my gentle Best who loved thee, Sara,
 And pitied thy starved heart ; and he had loved
 Wildly, I think, that beauteous boy of ours
 Had he been born alive. Where is he gone ? ”
 “ Whom, Judas, hast thou called ‘ thy Best ? ’ My
 child ? ”
 “ No, mine, not thine, for both are sons of mine ;
 But he alone is thine who died with thee :
 Speak to me of him.” And smiling she complied :
 “ His feet shrink from the gritty rugged earth
 And find its grass too coarse,”—and Judas saw
 The place was changed ; once more the open grave
 And moonlit cypresses stood near, but now
 That grandam saint was gone. Yet Sara’s eyes
 Were glorious with a like unbearable joy.
 “ We play,” she said, “ on more delectable hills,—
 We both were sick of earth when he was got,
 And that I think is why he shied at birth
 And drew me after him to safer haunts.
 I had felt drained of tenderness till then ;
 But now my heart is plished from his heart,
 And in him can see God.” “ But not in me ! ”
 Groaned Judas. “ Tell me, why art thou now clad ? ”
 She stared down on the blue garb that she wore
 In wonder ; then “ We are as we are seen,
 And answer expectation. This comes from thee.
 We knew the limits of each other’s shame,
 Therefore I willed it not. But hark, he calls ! ”
 With that she faded like a wreath of smoke
 A gust has driven astray among the shrubs
 From where the gardeners feed a fire of weeds.
 Judas rose ;—stared about, “ I must have dreamed,”
 He muttered. Then on that tomb he looked,
 Doubting his eyes as he might proven liars—
 Then on the shrubs,—and at Antonia’s cube,
 The castellated Roman citadel
 That between leafy spires towered gaunt,—

One grey wall light, the other dark against
The interstellar blue.
How much by him remembered of this night
Was dreamed, how much, as that tower seemed, beyond
The feverish control of his hurt brain ?
His hands passed over clotted beard and locks
As though to assure themselves those could be touched :
Then were held up till finger shadows slanted
In bars across their scarred and earthy palms
As though to assure him that they still were solid.

But lo ! a fresh sound issued from that tomb.
He stoops to catch glimpse of an end recess,
Its long rectangle pale with violet mist,
Wherein a shroud heaved tent-wise up, parts—
Brittle with age—falls in large flakes or rises
Like dust, as through it shrivelled black limbs break.
So much he dizzily gleaned, then turned in haste,
And blind with fear and pain reeled on through shrubs ;
Till to his heart it was like harbour gained
To stand beside a camp of sleeping pilgrims
And listen to their breathing. All around
Lay fragments and the vessels of their meal ;
And half a loaf where he might stoop and take it
Absorbed him to exclusion of all thought
Of saintly phantoms ; whereon hunger wrung
His bowels, and that nausea surging again
Drove him on desperate past more gaping tombs.
Not far ; he was too sapped by long fatigue.
Besides, that threat of sickness ended in
A cough that shook and dizzied his poor head
Till he must lean against a small square house
Built for an old king's bones. From thence ahead,
Some simple, some ornate with pointed roofs,
Such monuments ranged on, barring a broad walk
With straight-edged shadows, calm and sedative
To that harsh importunity in his brows.
At length his stunned mind was allowed to note
Where he was standing, against what leaned. Well-nigh
He laughed, recalling how, two years gone now,
His care was great never to touch such walls

When whitening them anew, or sweeping paths.
And if a tomb that held a nameless body
Had to be cleansed,—for some cannot afford
One freshly excavated,—O, the tedious pains
To purify himself against the sabbath !
Yet now he is unclean as any corpse :
Nay, though alive, more foul than flesh long dead :
Small wonder God's spirit rekindles them so brightly
That flickers like a smoky wick in him.

But thought to attention must yield place again :
A man grey-bearded moves after his shadow,
Projected grotesquely on the moon-bright wall,
Round from behind a tomb five tombs away.
Tunic'd in homespun like a stone-mason,
As master might, to judge of journeyman's work,
He runs a deliberate finger-tip along
Mouldings which panel that antique façade.
Judas recalls that air—the studious tip
Of that extended index, and that shock
Of never-tranquil hair, for Seth ben Caleb's.
And, tranced in wonder now to meet him here,
Approaches as somnambulist might to one
He sees, though those who watch him cannot see ;
And halts quite close to Seth, who has not heard him
Although his sandals have crunched on the gravel.
At length, with desperate effort like to a man's
Who breaks some law he dreads, speaks as though half
He thought himself alone ;—“ Rabbi, dost live ?
Or art thou risen spirit ? ” Seth starts and turns—
“ Judas bar Simon, art thou still alive ?
Gardening round tombs has made thee foul indeed ! ”
“ Rabbi, art flesh or phantom from the grave ? ”
Repeated the Iscariot, “ What dost thou here ? ”
“ What do I ? Why, examine fine work worthy
That Zion which shall be ! Is that a change ?
Have I not lifelong studied and toiled to be
Worthy those crystal streets ? Therefore it was,
Finding Ben Tallit houseless and foredone,—
With neither stone to cut nor food to eat,
But only rusting tools,—I took him in

And told him he should live as I myself
If he would teach me how to work in stone.
For though wood may cut sweeter, it cannot keep
Stone's keener edge, so long preserve fine polish,
Or match as near grain of celestial crystal !
I shut my shop on do-littles like thyself,
Who love to watch me work and suck my brains,
And talked with Tallit, while our four hands toiled,
Of those transparent walls : but his lewd mind
Had haunted harlots and grown shy of God ;
And before long I held my sides to laugh :
For he made question, what could wenches do
If they must live on view both night and day,
Their chambers all one window ?
As though we there should still be male and female !
Yet all that callous paddling in hired flesh
Had left him hands most reverent for stone.
I never met a man so much confused,
So fit to worship the beauty of those streets
And yet with such poor chance of pacing them.
Yea, many's the sabbath we two have passed here
When, would I have permitted, he had thumbed
This work and made himself unclean." " But, Rabbi,
Thou thyself dost ! " Judas gasped : but Seth
Cried " Ha, all that is changed ! This stone is now
To me but such a thought as crystal was.
I wait the call that will not long be waited
To chisel everlasting substance " ; and
He thrust his hand into that dead King's wall
As though stone had been air ; and Judas saw
As through thick clouded water in the solid
Five fingers spread ; and at the sight he felt
The stomach rise in him, and turned away
To retch and cough. When he looked round once more
No one stood near. Though dizzy pain still blurred
All that he gazed on, he limped forward hopeless,
As alien to dead saint as living man.
Him even death would fail to free ; he knew
All objects by the moon vested with light
Were lies ; yet him raised saints reject, though they
In contrast to all he had imagined of them

Were still like men, without a common will
To storm that city corrupted by vile rulers.

But from this moody gloom a voice well-known
Aroused his guilty soul with "Judas, lad,
I've sought thee many a night; for I lost life
On journey forced by thy hot-headed act,
That left lorn a good wife and our small field.
I had been patient father to thee, and even
To leave thee well-to-do had wronged my soul,
That yearned to be as the Essenes are."
And Judas stared upon his father's face,
Hueless, and framed by close-poll'd hair and beard:
Thick quarry dust still clung to shaggy brow
And lash; there, sad, strict, tall he stood
With resolute patience planted in the path.
"Why art thou risen? How come from thy far grave?"
With jerking jaw his fevered son exclaimed.
"Death caught my soul still taut-strung to secure
The aim of years; and, fettered to that purpose
I, as some poor lame-footed beast drags load
Uphill and makes no way, yet stale hope here,
And wander farther every night to meet thee.
I crossed 'neath frowning scars above Engedi,
Toward Kerioth hasting, when a slung stone rang
Against a rock: I spurred my beast and turned
The rugged tower of crag:
Then, noting well the spot,
Dropped the stout goatskin scrip that held my wealth
Down a deep fissure close beside the track;
And, with the staff I carried,
Rolled a boulder down:
'Twas wholly hidden; on I spurred, intent
To escape pursuit and soon return with help.
But, glancing back to see if yet those robbers
Were round that bluff, I must have baulked the mule;
He slipped and threw me. Haste thither, Judas;
Right of the track just after your back turns
Upon the sea below for the last time.
The stone rolled down was of a greenish white,—
In shape and size an earless ass's head.

Go find thy heritage ! ”—and with a smile
And sigh heaved from the depth of weary years
(As who may after long toil sink a-bed),
That pale gaunt phantom drew back through the air
Till it had faded to one hue with it :
While Judas, rooted, pondered likelihoods,—
How he might find that scrip, start a new life
In some far distant town,—be glad to live.
As humid wind restores a sun-scorched plant
Comfort caressed his broken trampled hopes ;
He saw life recommence, respect rewon,
Nay, even love ! Could he by begging make
That two days’ journey—three, since he must limp ?
The road was lonesome ; from whom should he beg ?
And then, should disappointment wait him there ?
He would not only stand before death’s door
As now, but force it ; and his old impatience
Lifted his head, a way the twelve knew well,
To scan the beauty of those moon-rapt gardens.

But lo ! he notes, the light forms nests among
The shrubs, as though mist rose between them ;
Then, gazing again, perceives a ghostly saint
Stand as in prayer within each lodge of light
Or slowly pace with it. There, two meet !
Three, where the brilliancy is stronger ! and yet
No murmur of greetings comes from them ;
Their gladness is expressed alone in light.
The music of stirred leaves attunes the silence
But never a hint of speech ; tears blind his eyes.
He feels that they ignore God’s splendid news ;
Yet who, than they, would gladlier receive it ?—
And Jesus now maybe is teaching others
To the north-west, how even to-night the kingdom
Shall sweep forth o’er the world like ripple on water,
As down the perfect city settles to be
The centre of the Peace of God on earth.
Like glimmering lamps in which the oil runs low
These faint until they hear !
He had been over-quick to assume they were not
Units of the Messiah’s destined host,—

These "sheep of other folds" whom Jesus spake of.
Let them but be collected, filled with tidings :
Is not himself a shepherd trained to call them ?
And with this thought, far other hopes revived
Than to dwell far-off a respected man.
The needed words are on his lips at once
To gather them—join those the Master teaches,
Invade yon haughty town, and watch the wicked
Annas and Caiaphas and that red-haired captain
Fall petrified or vainly seek to flee !
So he found strength once more to limp ; felt courage
As proxy for another, not in his own name,
To address those vivid eyes, whence God gazed forth.

Suddenly he stands next the nearest three,
Though by what path his mind has not perceived.
"The spirit, Sirs, that moves and shines in you
Has in a man called Jesus lived unsoiled,
Undimmed for thirty years." Those bright rapt faces
Cloud with perplexity and gaze at him
As flowers stare. "Naught seemed too hard for him,"
Judas hastes on, leaping from thought to thought,
"Silent when doomed to death by evil priests,—
Silent though nails were driven through his hands.
As in a worthy son his father's spirit,
God lived in him, a man the friend of men !"
But deep with velvet gloom like purple pansies
Their eyes distended yet. "He called men brothers,
Though many seemed as little kin to him
As were lewd porters from some town of Egypt,
Ancestored by stone apes they worship yet.
Ah, he could fathom every stagnant soul :
His words descended into failure's sink,
As when the angel troubles deep Bethesda,
And drew the healed soul forth from evil habit.
He even declared that captive in the vilest
There languished the same spirit that in him
Had strength to live and die. . . ."
Dark wonder in those eyes which he addressed
Grew to engulf him ; as he who enters door
Out of the blaze of noon finds himself lost

In cave stupendous, so Judas seemed to have come
Through pupil of some Titan eye, on cloudless
Starless, creationless night, wherein thought dropped
Like a numbed bird : then straightway was aware
He spoke to cypresses and was alone.

Hardly the thought that dream deluded him
Had flushed his brain, ere he saw just beyond
Twelve spirits, whose hands linking formed a circle
Which, as in stately rapture tranced, moved round.
Each was white-clad in flannel like Essene
Yet wore no pick-axe dangling from the waist-cord.
Each gazed in other's eyes, trembled with joy,
Then turned and sought fresh face, as wedding guest
Might marvel at better wine served after good.
He felt drawn towards them : but before his hand
Could touch the nearest, sound arrested him,
From far away as seemed, yet proper to them ;—
Though like words sung within the soul that heard,
From it their mouths took shape, their eyes acclaimed
With eager welcome each half-uttered thought :—
“ In the dark and rock-bound tomb
We retraced our every mood,
From death's whelming hour of gloom ;
Backward vividly reviewed
Every act and every thought
Till to serene childhood brought.

Then the Spirit breathed again,
Eased and suppled, and bade rise
Limbs deformed by age and pain :
We came forth with God-lit eyes
That with others can make whole
Friendship between soul and soul.”

“ Look in my eyes, dear spirits : they have gazed
On that one man's who never lost God's face
Among the human crowd. I can rehearse
His teaching that made hard men young anew.
Despise me not ; I am not wont to walk
Unwashed with raiment rent.” The circle broke

Vehemently distraught, for some would drag
The others who lent ear away from him.
“ Your texture fears no taint ; Souls, you can read
My soul, and your kind lips will heal these lips
From that last wounding kiss. . . .” But hand quits
hand ;
They separate to scatter through the shrubs,
Averting faces masked in dead white horror,
Waving wide sleeves like wings flamingos flap,
Where rock yields place to flat sand south of Joppa,
Scared by noon-gliding coaster, whose broad sail
Painted with dolphins is close on to them
Before they are aware, for summer heats
Merge the drowsed sea and heavens into one.
These phantoms waved their sleeves and then streamed
off,
Even as, dispersed, those large birds soon form file
To trail their long legs far across the wave.

Him seemed he knew each face now they were gone :
Yes, they were twelve ; his own had been that one
He had felt shyest of, least dared encounter.
No spirits were they then, but a mere dream ?
Or had his true soul left him when he fell
Stunned, hearing how his Master died ? Had theirs
Left them ? Were they bereft of God’s part even
As he ? Or long before had Jesus gleaned their souls ?
Was it strength from those who loved him made him
strong
To be all he had been through that last year ?
Robbed of their best had he left Judas, John,
James, Peter, Andrew, Thomas, brutes and dolts
And cowards, such as they had proved themselves
Since death undid that wizard whom they loved ?
And indignation bounded in his breast,
Struggling against his pain, like furious mule
Against the bit, that stamps and rears and fumes.
But then the cold fit, like a pail of water
Thrown o’er such frantic beast, brought him the thought
How all in him that he had failed to give
To Jesus in the old days then caused him anguish—

Not that he gave too much or against will.
 His pain had been to love, not live those thoughts,—
 To envy their conceiver, he whose face
 From childhood had grown with his mind to beauty ;
 Who, Judas felt sure, would have welcomed such
 Thought from himself with glad ungrudging smile.
 Lo, as he brooded thus it came again ;
 Whether in memory or borne elsewhere
 It, streaming through far gardens, reached his ear :
 He had no leave to think,—
 Mere hearing so absorbed him :
 “ In the dark eventless tomb
 We retraced our every mood
 From death’s whelming hour of gloom. . . .”
 “ How mad a doubt have I been dashed with now !
 They were true ghosts, not doubles of us twelve ;
 No part of me was of their fellowship.
 But, Satan’s dupe, I dare not trust a thought !”
 And yet this thought ruled Judas, and he stole
 Deserter-like away from those sweet sounds :
 “ We came forth with God-lit eyes
 That with others can make whole
 Friendship between soul and soul.”
 Ah, they pursue ! and pain prevents his haste.

But who are these he meets, who flock up-hill ?
 They pass him, as at times a laggard mist,
 Detected by sun rays, will leave the valley
 Where it has lurked a long watch after dawn ;—
 Cloudlets like bowed backs toiling up a slope,
 What urgency compels their milk-white troops
 Though he himself have turned to redescend ?
 But still attention, fearful lest he slip,
 Examines the ground, and cannot spare a glance
 For these that pass him. Yea, for well he knows
 Whither they haste—with whom they soon will meet—
 And where. No cause have they to dread or shun
 Gethsemane, which spot must neighbour this :
 He had not thought till now how near. These saints,
 Summoned there by the Spirit, soon will join
 The Master where he lost his earthly friends.

They, they will be his ushers, and command
Yon sullen gates lift up their heads to let
The King of Glory in. None of the Twelve,
And least of all himself, shines in that blaze
With which God's judgment must confound the world,
But these that toil up past him noiseless, intent.
And, while he studies placing his hurt feet
To avoid root or stone or ruck of rock
Protruding through the hillside—far within
Before that crowd of ancient witnesses
Stored with old holiness, white as moonlight,
His soiled and limping, sorry, bandaged person
Crawls out to kiss the Lord, as when he stepped
Two nights ago before the Temple guard
To kiss that dreaded face. And Jesus sees him ;
And Judas notes love light the face he fears,—
Kind recognition of his disciple's woe,—
Who straight finds strength to totter to a run
Like forlorn prodigal to meet his father
Wide-armed and running too. But O confusion !
Those heartening looks had not been meant for him :
Someone behind him they have singled out.
And Judas beat both fists upon his chest,
Stopped dead, and sank back on his heels ;
Mortified to have met so glad a welcome
Which yet was not for him. The anguish rankled
Till death appeared the only salve ; despair
Has this one hope, to end,—wants naught save means
To finish with itself. The olive-yards
Here confine with these gardens, and their trees
For suicides have proper cranking arms ;
While from young tree to stake, from stake to tree
Rope rounds new tombs. His head lifts, and his eye
Picks out such fence of cypresses, too weak
To stand alone against the desert storms
That from the east and south are to be dreaded.
He rises and detaches a good length ;
Then while he coils it round elbow and thumb
Notes how the holy still pass up and up.
His thought jumps ; ah, not happened yet :
“ That second meeting in Gethsemane

Was but a dream. I have not yet been there.
And he was ever kinder than I hoped :
Satan has shown me what could never be.”
And yet he tied the hank to take with him,
And soon stood by a terrace above which
Old olives filled with light were ranged in ranks.
His head was on a level with their feet :
The saints so crowded there, few of their trunks
Were seen, but that in ever-shifting streams
Those white-robed folk, restless, expectant, part
Or close. Too weak to climb, his arms on the wall
Just rest, while his hot eyes devour the stir.
But lo ! the yard tilts as that pavement did
When he fell stunned, on learning Jesus had been
The Haman of that cruel Purim pageant.
He closed his lids ; but oh ! the dark still moved
With dreadful nearness ; when he opened them
The spirits flocked together through the olives
Towards the press. He lifts his head ; and lo !
Not three yards off a stair of long slabs bedded
Half in the terrace wall. Seeing the means,
He finds the strength to climb and limp on whither
The most throng is, dragged on despite his dread.
So Jephthah quaking neared his home to learn
Whose the dear life devoted by his vow :
That chieftain recognised
His daughter’s eager fifteen years with such
A pang as Judas felt
When the crowd parting left a lane for him
To approach that king most patient with lame feet,
Who scorns no hobbler, though his clothes be filth
And his unwashed body caked with mire :
Though in his hand he carry coiled the rope
He meant to hang himself with in that place :—
And have such haunted eyes as dare not meet
With those which smile and wait his tardy coming.

To lift the gaze may even require strength
Knit like a Daniel’s unflinching resolution,—
Yet abject Jacob held the angel fast :
And Judas lifted his head and thus beheld

A naked man with wounded hands and feet,
But with an unknown face ; quite different hair
To that which he had felt sure he should see.
Amazed he stopped, drew back and stared again,
While the great silence of that host of souls
Pressed in on him with weight as of a mile
Of motionless sea-water on man drowning,
Till it had soaked right through his heart like death.
Yet Joy still stood before him in the eyes
Of that strange man whose wounds were like those wounds
That Jesus must bear both in hand and foot.

And soon he knew that joy would speak to him
And lift this ocean silence off with ease.
While all those faces of the holy dead
Were eager as his own to hear : and yet
That latest soundless second was drawn out
Till record of his whole life seemed but brief ;
A scanty preface to one ponderous moment.
Yet ere he heard the voice, he knew that face
For his whom he had seen upon the cross
That stood to the right hand of one then stripped,
On which his Master had been nailed for Haman :
And then that silence crumbled into words :
“ Thou comrade chosen of Him who died with me,
And gentle friends of good, who wait for bliss,
All I can tell you is what I have felt.
Blinding, deafening, searing pain increased ;
Seemed to have always been, to imply no end :
Nightmare which held me jailed for years in darkness
Just co-extensive with my tender flesh ;
And yet its empire suffered change ; at length
A voice was heard like madness mocking anguish,—
An iterance of inappropriate gibes,
Persisting, ‘ It is finished, finished, finished !
The stuff on which thine agony lived is dead !
Only forsake it, and thou shalt be free.
Those transpierced hands and feet, those shattered knees,
And that atrocious torture of thy fork
Jammed on the staple since thy sinews gave,
Are but a baseless unspiritual dream’s

Mechanical continuance ; Awake !
 O wake !' and lo ! a man's face flashed in view,
 On which a smile moved stiffly after pain
 As though his hard-wrung features were yet numb.
 Still joy had dawned in that deep clearing gaze
 As though a light should shine from under billows
 Heaving and black still after a long storm,
 And prove those dark forbidding depths concealed
 A kinder place where dwelt command of light.
 And still it grew, as in a sky young day,
 Till features glowed between long ordered strands
 Of crimped chestnut hair, to each side equal.
 And O ! I felt the spirit of that mien
 Curb, lull and cow, and drive back, back,
 My pain, reluctant to let go its prey.
 At last, like child that runs to mother, like
 Lover to loving arms,
 Hand with friend's rescuing hand
 My spirit seized on his, merged in his mood.
 So parched lips on the cup's brim meet with wine ;
 So famished teeth bed in the crumb of bread ;
 So heart abounds to heart in peaceful night ;
 And yet his face was all mine eyes beheld.
 So I glanced round : for had his words not been
 (The last I heard before pain stopped mine ears)
 ' Thou shalt sup with me in my father's house ' ?
 He with low laughter brought my strayed gaze home.
 ' Shall there be cup and platter, table and couch,
 Walls, where the spirit dwells ? ' He asked (or seemed to)
 ' Shall bodies that confined the pining soul
 Confuse and pester those who quaff deep peace ? '
 Then like a bird that revels in blue height
 Rising as though it sought trees on the clouds
 And had itself a nest built in their boughs,
 I journeyed, leaping through undoméd light,
 All recollection left behind, all thought ;
 Save this,—
 Through death he clave to me, whom I clave to :—
 Till I grew conscious that you sought for me,
 Not being so free, not being so glad as I.
 Straight I was here, and, as you see me, saw

This moonlight and these trees and your dear selves."

A silence fell, as though his words like rain
Had sounded on calm sea and now sank through it.
The olives rustled soon ; which stir led forth
Sighs and soft questions from unearthly voices
Fluting from here or there like birds ere dawn :—
" Has Zion then no wall ? "—" Will this form fade
Even as my body died ? " or " Where is he
Who roused thee to this gladness ? "—" Wouldest thou
That I should plunge, O Ocean Light, in thee ?
How shall I dare ? " or yet again " Speak on,
Thou that wast crucified ! what hadst thou been
That thou art now the shepherd of my soul ? "
Then that young man, whose black mane filled with life,
As in high wind it might, though none was blowing,
Said : " Brothers, here we stifle under trees,
Objects betray us to our sometime habits,
The mental outfit of dense-bodied men.
Rise we together to more roomy regions
Where what is strong within us may, like light
Set on a tower, go forth, discovering wonders
Of life in modes men could not even conceive."
The whole white congregation rose thereat
While Judas crouched down, agued with fierce awe
And joy that hurt like fear,—like strong enfolding
Arms strained about his bruised and tender flesh,
Trying to lift him bodily, yet that fail
Because he dare not yield himself to them.

But when he saw those ranks of gnarled stems,
And all the ground between them patterned with dot,
Oval and streak of light,
From the branch-curtained moon,
And no white spirit near, a hurry gripped him,
A paroxysm of dread lest, left behind,
Never his ear should hear such voices more.
He threw a loop of rope across a bough
Three cubits overhead, passed the loose ends
There-through, and tugged it tight : and next prepared
A running noose in the one end ; drew that too

Close to the bough, o'er which he tossed that end
And after knotted both about the trunk.
Last, with a strength like Samson's when each arm
Was round a pillar, hand over hand made way
Along the bough, till through that looped rope he
Could pass his head,
Groan and let go.

A sudden blow struck up beneath his jaw
That almost broke his neck, and now he swings
Strangling, with frantic hands and toes
That all but touch the ground. The rope snaps next :—
He falls, his mouth is filled with blood ; his thought
Leaps like a madman after his desire,—
Then back into his aching impotence
That lies on the hard earth, then leaps again
And sees what the slow vulture circling ponders ;—
Jerusalem and the Dead Sea at a glance ;
Jericho, with her diamonds, those fresh pools,
Bosomed in balsam closes and palm groves ;
The hills beneath him, moulded as it were
In silver with indigo shaded,—the moon so shines.
But he would follow higher through the night
Echo he hardly heard, which, dropping thence,
Lingered behind some choral soaring flight :
An upward spasm then overtook these words :—
Tiny voice that singest
I hear thee, and I see
Where the desert ringeth
Boy I used to be ;
Who though that place be great
would fill it with his glee.

Smaller voice, in vaster
Temple now I sing,
Freed from life's disaster ;
With my Spirit-King
Brimmed and flooding like
a rock cup with its spring.

I was wild and joyous,
Fierce as lynx,—yet still
Thought that shall destroy us,

By which we hurt and kill,—
Since God has made the desert
its law must be His Will.

Look ! the past is emptied :
What has been is not :
From my deserts exempted
With his kindness fraught,
I, who robbed and hunted,
triumph being caught.

Was my steed my pillow
On the sand at night ?
Rideth skiff the billow
Smoothly as his might
Bore me an hope, an arrow
to overtake delight ?

Raced his strong limbs for me ?
Pranced they when I bade ?
As though mine own, they bore me
And with my glee were glad ;
And I, when they were wearied,
felt my heart grow sad.

Now I ride thy splendour,
Gentlest, grandest, best ;—
Till like fawn most tender
By its dam I rest
Beside Thy glorious dying
in the crimson west.

Thou my steed, my parent,
Thou my world, my light—
Making all apparent
Which lay drowned in night,
Till naught is or can be,
but as Thou art bright.

He can no further rise : that thin clear song
Escapes into the zenith : he must fall.
Something strong in his body on the ground
Recalls him madly, and he tastes the blood

Slow oozing through his mouth, and feels the light,
Shafted between swayed foliage, hover upon
The hot lid of each eye. Without a wish
He waits for death : his heart, worn out, prefers
Entire cessation to the essay of heaven
With its long drawn-out tedium of fatigue.
Bitter lucidity shows him his failure :
The greedy haste of those who long to shape
Events and men, had tempted him to risk
The gambler's throw ; and he the first time lost
Husband- and fatherhood ; the second throw
Had staked his Master ; with the third his life
Was cast for hope to follow to the stars
Those spirits who had waited God's good time.
Jesus so waited : though the cross had proved
Him no Messiah, yet from many a tomb
Had he drawn souls that night ; for, true to God
Even through death he learnt where he misjudged,
And so helped those whose truth had bred less light.
Him nothing crushed, for that young lad in him
Had still been certain he could not suffice
Unless it were God's will to help them through.
Yea, Jesus may have spoken of kingdom, thrones,
And renegade priests evinced by sworded angels
Not merely in figure ; yet never relied on arms
Wherever smithied, but on the spirit within,—
God's son among the sons of human failure,—
Who lives with them and loves to hear them talk,
Accepting notions from them modestly :
Yet when the call for action came was wholly
Obedient to his Father, as they, then, awed,
Whom his bright smiles had cheered, gave place at once
To the perfect purity of his deep impulse.
Thus, unlike Jacob's tent, may his Lord's bosom
Have welded together yet more varied brethren.
Ah, not like that, as Judas knew too well,
Were his decisions prompted ;—so had lacked
The single-eye which feeds the soul with light :
With it, himself had shared his Master's death,
Not like the eleven driven from his side,
But tranquil in support, a friend in need :

Then too his own worst pangs had not been lonely,
But each calamity had found them both
Willing to do their best, yet bear the worst,
Like patient bullocks 'neath a single yoke :—
As Jesus oft pled with each man to think
Of Him as fellow-ox, and find that easy
Is hard unshared. “ I then belike had come
To shepherd that white flock which lately strayed
Along this Mount of Olives. Who knows where
I now with them were gone ? to taste what mode
Of inconceivable life in other fields ! ”

Alas ! for all these thoughts
The lyric lure of sainthood no more lifts him,—
Goal out of reach, as that clear song had soared
Beyond the straining effort of his ear.
Self-mangled and befouled, what could he feel—
His young frame's vigour knotted hard or ravelled
By false surmise, too little scrupulous hope
And fierce desire,—but pang on pang of shame
And torturing pity, impotent to mould
The congealed past that never more shall melt ?
Besides, one broken arm, pinned under him,
Grew to such pain as oft he fainted at ;
So that clear thoughts fell but as light let through
Dense intercepting ranks of serried cloud,
Advancing constantly from verge to verge
Of a light-filled dome from which they shut him down.
Then audible voice seemed near him to heave sigh
As might the angel
Of one headstrong, who long had scorned to heed,
And after came these words :
“ O deep disgust with self, that views in others
What might have been, what should have been in us !
Thou drivest thought to limp through memory,—
That waste of frozen pale reflected action
Where Will divorced from effort roams in vain.
Look, Judas, read, scratched clear upon the wall
That skirts the market at Capernaum,

‘ Clopas of Cana loves Mary of Magdala

And offers all he has for what she sells
To others for small fractions of their wealth.'

You twelve dumbfounded watch your Master cut
Beneath the fresh inscription with his knife :—

' Mary found One who, asking nothing, gave
More than she hoped. Her tears have washed his feet ;
Hers never need seek love or wealth again.' "

Long silence fell, while Judas listened vainly
For some renewal of that neighbour voice :
At length his sick mind turned again to thought ;
Mary the harlot found, and that thief found ;
But he had not found, though he staked his all.
Was suicide less a sin than theft or whoredom ?—
Repentance for it not so worthy pardon ?
Question corrosive to all patience—setting
His mangled prostrate body
Agasp for tardy death ; or was it rather
Those chanting priests had waked him ? They in choir
Declare the sun's first ray has struck on Hebron.
Now their horns boom, Antonia's bugle answers,
Grey morning has replaced the silver night.
Hereon his body's misery whelmed him anew ;
Nor, till its flood subsided, could he think
How some hot and impatient flaw had ever
Spoiled his soul's eager passionate perseverance :
He ne'er could long inhabit his best mood.—
Like one who scarce is home with all he loves
But must to window run, distraught by uproar
Surged in the street, and, baulked by a crowd's backs
Must leave the door ajar and hurry to learn
What mischief with the homeless Satan brew.
" O precious beauty of the Son within,—
Thou gentlest voice of many in the mind,—
Speak a last time ! and let my hearing cease
Before thy voice be still." So Judas prayed,
And heard a faint small singing far within ;
And yet him seemed that he saw Jesus chant
Far, far aloft, as though his pale face were
Painted in profile like a half moon hung

Above the clouds and out of reach of harm :
Naught of his person else, except that voice
Which might proceed, or might not, from those lips ;

“ I like the moon am,
That follows the sun
To glorify afresh
A world foredone.

Those failure and dust
And heat have jaded
Revive in my pureness,
By my patience are aided.

I am nearer and dearer,
Though gliding through heaven,
Than the loads you limp under
Over stones uneven.

Can towering ambition
Or the gains that men die for
Compete with the beauty
That I am on high for ?

The power which fills me
Is wholly aware
That it yields what is wanted,
Completes what is there ;

Is kindness only,
And fully bestowed :
What you suffer I suffered,—
Yea, bled on that road ;

The way you are going
Is the way that I went ;
And the thought in you growing
Is all my words meant.”

Darkness, the emanation of hot pain,
Drooped like a vulture's wing across his face :
While sound and mood were balm, the song's sense flushed
But fled ; for still, like gall upon the tongue,

Judas the whole time knew the voice had thrilled
 To note more splendid in full-raptured hearts ;—
 For Mary and that Thief, yea, for uncounted
 Hearts of re-risen saints :—which crude despite
 As at loath'd justice dealt by judge adored,
 Rankled like stale torture in his arm,
 Even when, absorbed, his gaze fed on a vision
 That opened out a breadth of violet sky
 In which there sailed the loveliest white cloud,
 Whose far-extended simply-outlined form
 Him-seemed he knew to be
 Compact with multitude of air-borne saints
 That like a raft of dazzling snow sailed on
 Far voyage towards a star, the day-spring's torch,
 The meek and intense herald of full light,
 Magnet of patience, mirror unto God,
 Which he for Jesus knew : it lay beyond them
 Even as his outshone their holiness.
 But still pain's hot dark wings would intervene,
 Like the slow-passing shadow of a sail
 Languid for lack of wind, blotting that vision.
 Then, as it duly grew once more to brightness,
 Surely his angel, sweet-tuned, heartened him,
 Yet solemn as who takes a long last leave ;—
 Calamity he lacks the strength to dread,
 That parting loomed quite certainly at hand,
 While humid-eyed he listened to this prompting :
 “ Gaze thou upon the cloud :—now on the star.
 A multitude in joy that ; this thy Lord,
 Who flashes mankind's gain like diamond.
 Yet let thy thought once more sail with those saints,—
 For they are steering forth and on, till now
 Their myriads might be hid by hand outstretched.
 They dwindle yet, soon will be gone ; e'en then
 Yon focus of pure light will still be shining
 E'en through the blackest of pain's cruel night ;
 Shall glimmer on annihilation's brink,
 Outlasting knowledge that thou still art tortured.”
 And, conscious how that cloud grew small and went
 Farther from him into that quiet dawn,
 Thought failed in Judas : soon he ceased to breathe.

GLOSSARY OF LESS FAMILIAR PROPER NAMES, ETC.

	PAGES
ACRA. That quarter of Jerusalem on the hill which faces Mount Moriah, the Temple hill to the west	19
ANTONIA. This building stood on the east side of Jerusalem, immediately north of the Temple, overlooking its courts, so that the Romans could intervene in case of tumults occurring within the sacred enclosures	11.86
ARISTOBULUS. A tower in the walls named after the brother of Mariamne Herod the Great's wife	42
ALPHÆUS. The father of the disciple, James-the-Less	59
AZAZEL. Mentioned as chief of the rebel Angels in the Book of Enoch	24.29
BEZETHA. That quarter of Jerusalem which lay to the north and west	19
ESSENE. One of a celibate order of pious men who rejected the authority of the priests and denied the sacredness of the Temple	21
EUPATOR. Antiochus V, King of Syria, 164 B.C.	15
HAMAN. <i>See</i> PURIM	26
JOSEPH. A tower in the walls of Jerusalem built by Herod the Great and named after his brother	42
MACCABÆUS. Judas Maccabæus, the greatest of the Maccabee brothers, who prevented the Syrian despots from entirely subjugating the Jews	13
MAMZER. Hebrew for bastard=son of his mother	49
MARIAMNE. A tower in the walls named after the wife of Herod the Great	42
MERAB. An imaginary character betrothed to Judas Iscariot, and daughter of Obed ben Tallit	39
MORDECAI. <i>See</i> PURIM	26
OBED BEN TALLIT. <i>See</i> MERAB	39
OPHEL. The south-eastern quarter of Jerusalem which lay at the foot of the Temple hill outside the Dung Gate	13.78
PHAESALUS. A tower in the western wall of Jerusalem named after a brother of Herod the Great	42
PURIM. Sir James Frazer, in the <i>Golden Bough</i> , suggests that possibly Jesus may have died as Haman in the celebration of the Feast of	

	PAGES
Purim. It seems certain that the Book of Esther is a pious travesty of the myth of Ishtar=Esther and Marduc=Mordecai (divinities of the new year as Haman and Vashti of the old year) and substitutes a patriotic import for the original magic. The celebration of the Feast of Purim=Sacaea was a custom brought back from the captivity in Babylonia, the native home of this cult. Sir James' suggestion enhances the poetical and religious significance of the story of the Passion. Outworn notions of substitution and redemption would thus have conspired in the tragedy out of which more spiritual forms of those ideas were to be evolved. It is possible that pious Pharisees were shocked by this pagan celebration, and that the Sadducees were cynically indifferent to it, and hence efforts to suppress and revive it led to much irregularity in its celebration about this period	21.26
RUFUS. An imaginary character; disciple of Seth ben Caleb and friend of Judas	41
SANHEDRIM. The council of seventy-one elders, supposed to rule under the Roman Governor, but really at this period dominated by Annas, the ex-high priest	9.49
SARA. An imaginary character; wife of Judas	41.85
SETH BEN CALEB. An imaginary character. Judas had been his disciple for a time	24.88
SIMON BEN EZRA. Father to Judas	21
SILOAM. A village at the foot of the Mount of Olives, divided from Ophel by the Kedron	13.72
TUACH. Imaginary character; friend to Judas' parents	40
TYROPEAN. The gully or ravine that divides Mount Moriah from Acra	68
XISTUS PAVEMENT. A wide open terrace joined to the Temple by bridges across the Tyropcean	24

SOME RECENT PRESS OPINIONS

THE POWERS OF THE AIR.

“ For felicity and melody we may turn to the verse scattered through his prose dialogue, *The Powers of the Air*. . . . One thinks of Landor though more for contrast than resemblance. Seldom does Mr. Sturge Moore make a phrase that graves itself like one of Landor’s ; but, on the other hand, his rhythm is more varied and characterised, his talkers are more visible. And one might add, perhaps, there is greater subtlety in the talk, in which . . . one speaker exalts the beauty of the visible and then Socrates draws out the theme of an invisible, immaterial beauty, revealed by matter only as the flow of a stream is indicated by stirring weeds and leaves. . . . The charm and interest of his work lies in its sincerely constructive, imaginative nature.”

THE NEW STATESMAN, May 21, 1921.

DANAË, AFORETIME, BLIND THAMYRIS.

“ *Blind Thamyris* is a work of great beauty, rich in imagination, strong and vivid in description . . . a piece of noble prose.”—THE TIMES LITERARY SUPPLEMENT, Feb., 1920.

“ These graceful undulating sentences flowing without constraint, lovely to the ear in rhythmic cadence, are free from all metric limitation, and may serve by the pathos of their subject to rivet a closer attention upon the splendid poems that precede them. . . . He never loses himself in ecstasy, but with fine passages of calm, cool brightness, never cloying and never feverish, continually rouses in the reader a sense of bracing rapture.”—CALEB READE in “The Literary Review”: NEW YORK EVENING POST, May 28, 1921.

TRAGIC MOTHERS.

“ Mr. Yeats’ efforts at writing plays which shall thrill with something of the reticent dignity of the ‘Noh’ plays of Japan had a grave beauty ; but Mr. Sturge Moore, in his ‘Medea,’ has not only the beauty but an intensity of passionate feeling which is rare in modern drama, especially when it touches classical themes. . . . The second play is of ‘Niobe.’ It has not the intense flame of beauty which makes the ‘Medea’ a glowing thing of gold ; but there are passages which one feels tempted to say no other poet save Keats could have written.”—THE OBSERVER, Feb. 27, 1921.

SOME SOLDIER POETS.

“ Mr. Moore, however, is the sort of writer whom one ought to read in his entirety, and to whom one might very well vow the sort of allegiance that men used to pay—I am not comparing the relative justifications, however—to Ruskin, to Carlyle, or to Pater. . . . But I must pass over Mr. Moore’s articles with their beautiful quotations from the soldier poets to the conclusion of the book, where . . . he has included one of the best articles ‘ On Poetry in General,’ as Hazlitt called it, that I have ever read.”—LLEWELLYN JONES in “ The Literary Review ”: CHICAGO EVENING POST, Aug. 6th, 1920.

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